MEMORIALS OF ST. JAMES'S STREET

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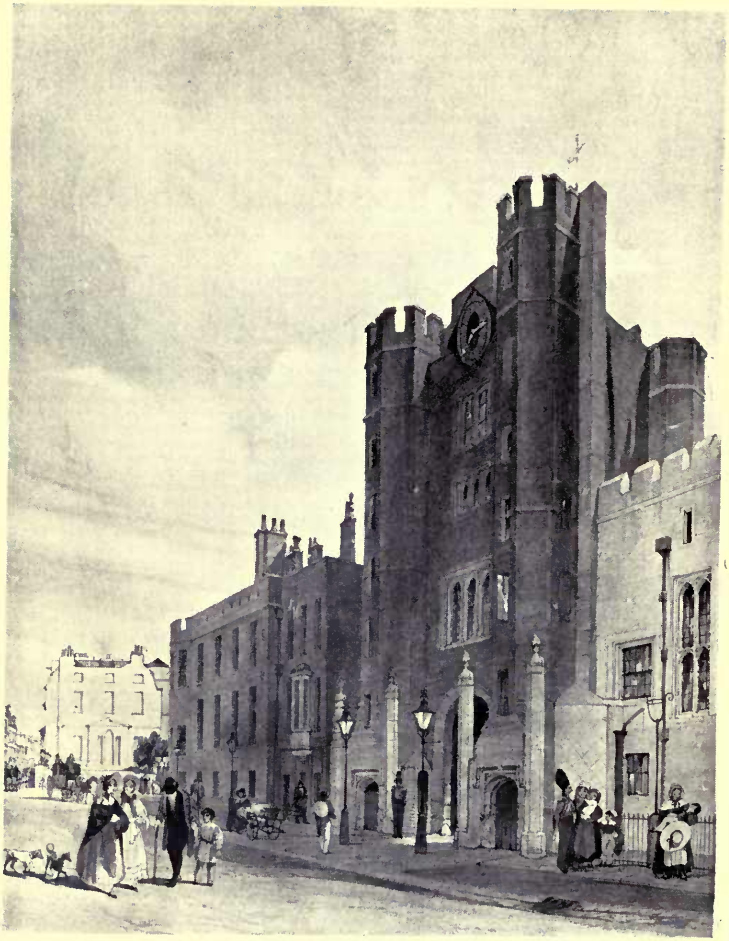
MEMORIALS OF ST JAMES'S STREET

By the Same Author

THE HISTORY OF THE SQUARES OF LONDON
THE PRIVATE PALACES OF LONDON
KNIGHTSBRIDGE AND BELGRAVIA
WANDERINGS IN PICCADILLY AND PALL MALL
THE ANNALS OF FLEET STREET
THE ANNALS OF THE STRAND
WALKS AMONG LONDON'S PICTURES
LIVES OF THE BRITISH ARCHITECTS
LIVES OF THE BRITISH SCULPTORS
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN LONDON

Etc.



ST. JAMES'S PALACE

From a drawing by T. S. Boys

~~C4545m~~

MEMORIALS OF ST JAMES'S STREET

TOGETHER WITH

THE ANNALS OF ALMACK'S

BY

E. BERESFORD CHANCELLOR, M.A.

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

> "Behold that street—the Omphalos of Town!
> Where the grim palace wears the prison's frown.
> What tales—what morals of the elder day—
> If stones had language—could that street convey."
> *The New Timon.*

180494.
15.5.23.

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NOTE

This attempt to trace the history of one of London's most notable thoroughfares has been undertaken because nobody has done it before. White's and Brooks's have both had their historians; the ana concerning the social and political aspect of St James's Street are endless; but, curiously enough, a volume concerned solely with the annals of the street—topographical and historical, social and political—has not hitherto been attempted. Similarly nothing of a complete character has before been published about Almack's, an institution which occupied a dominating position in fashionable London life during more than half-a-century of that life's gayest and most festive career. Under these circumstances an apology for swelling, by yet another book, the already vast library of Londoniana seems hardly necessary.

I have refrained from touching, except indirectly, on St James's Palace, because that historic pile has already been fully dealt with by the late Canon Edgar Sheppard.

As on former occasions I have been generously assisted by many in whose power it was to give me special help; and I take this occasion of here tendering a general expression of gratitude—gratitude that is particularly due to Mr Harvey, the well-known book and print seller of St James's Street, for information concerning his interesting property in Pickering Place; as well as to the custodians of the Rate Books at the St Martin's Town Hall, whose courtesy has not by any means been shown me for the first time.

E. B. C.

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By T. S. Boys

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PART I

ST JAMES'S STREET

I

ST JAMES'S STREET IN THE PAST

(1) EARLY PLANS; (2) RATE BOOKS; (3) THE HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS COMMISSION

Although the portion of the West End of London comprised in the area around St James's Palace may properly be said to owe its fashionable existence to Henry Jermyn, Earl of St Albans, who created St James's Square on ground granted him by Charles II. in 1664, the presence of the Palace, converted by Henry VIII. from the Leper Hospital originally standing here, in or about 1528, must have given this district a *cachet* even at this early period, and obviously marked it out for that building development which invariably takes place around any royal edifice.

It is unfortunate that Agas's great plan of London, *circa* 1560, does not extend sufficiently westward to include this then outlying portion of the Metropolis. Especially is this regrettable because Agas is the first cartographer who attempted to deal carefully with his subject and marked, with no little precision, the roads and streets of the London that then existed. Wyngaerde, who produced his famous "view" some ten years earlier, has left us a most interesting general picture of the city, but his production was inevitably rough and ready, particularly when it dealt with outlying areas, so that although he shows us St James's Church and marks the "King's Palace," by a note, on his picture (there is no indication, architecturally, of the building), he shows us nothing else but open country. The perspective (not very well understood then) of his view is responsible for this to a large extent, and we might be inclined to think that in those days no precursor to the St James's Street, which here specially interests us, was in existence, if we relied too much on what Wyngaerde has set down.

There is little doubt, however, that at least a roadway of some sort ran up from the Palace gate to the important way to Readinge, as Piccadilly was then called, during Tudor days, and that such a roadway, with hedges on both sides and having all the characteristics of a country lane, was the first step towards the St James's Street of fashionable, political and convivial associations, which it became in the eighteenth century and which it so largely remains to-day.

At first all the area through which the thoroughfare runs was known as St James's Fields, which roughly extended from the Haymarket westward. Here, where is now St James's Square, stood a conduit built of bricks, and adjoining it a round house of stone. Bacon mentions these in his *Historia Naturalis*, and evidently was personally acquainted with the two structures, for he remarks that "in the brick conduit there is a window, and in the round house a slit or rift of some breadth," and he tells how "if you cry out in the rift it will make a fearful roaring at the window."[1] That building development must have been begun with some activity even under the Commonwealth is proved by the fact that Cromwell, on 11th August 1656, issued a proclamation for "a stay of all further buildings in the fields commonly called St James's Fields."

It is not easy to say exactly whereabouts this building took place, but from the usual course we may presume it to have begun on the east side of the area in question and

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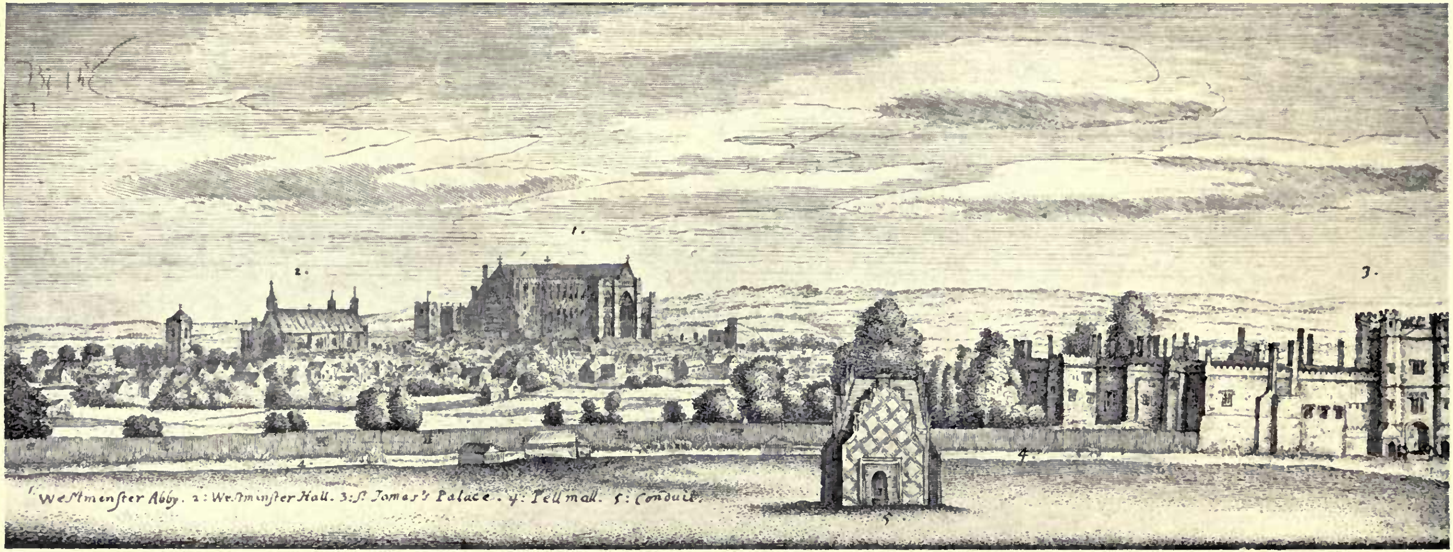
[1] A good view of the conduit is shown in Hollar's view of St James's Palace.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1. Westmenster Abby. 2: Westminster Hall. 3: St James's Palace. 4: Pell mall. 5: Conduit.

ST. JAMES'S CONDUIT (ABOUT 1660)

After a drawing by Hollar

to have progressed westwards. The Rate Books for this early period are at best uncertain guides. The different methods pursued by various rate-collectors, the extremely puzzling way in which they made their rounds, the absence of exact particularisation as to the streets, etc., visited, all help to render these records hazy. A careful examination of them from the year 1599 (before which the name of St James's does not appear) leads one to suppose, however, that in that year two people were living along the road which is now St James's Street, their names being Mrs Anne Poulteney and Mr Baldwin. Why I am inclined to think that these two precursors resided in this particular quarter of the parish is because the name of Poulteney (later written Pulteney) is traceable, with different Christian names, in St James's Street down to a period long after this name is given to the roadway in the Rate Books, and there seems to be, for at least over a hundred years, no break in this kind of apostolic succession, the simple Poulteney, which I take to be the Mrs Anne of 1599, continuing till it gives place to Michael Poulteney in 1638,[1] which in turn is changed to William Poulteney in 1654, the latter becoming Sir William in 1660 onwards. We may thus, I think, regard the name of Pulteney as being the one earliest and longest associated with "our street." Baldwin, who started equal in the race, does not appear to have survived beyond 1629, after which year we know him no more; but as, in 1603, he is found paying twenty shillings in rates, he must be considered as a person of some importance in his day.

Whereabouts these forerunners lived can be purely but a matter of conjecture. In 1660 Sir William Pulteney[2] is given as residing then on the west side of St James's Street. If, therefore, he occupied ancestral property, we may suppose such property to have been situated in this position and to have been that in which Mrs Anne Poulteney was living in 1599.

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[1] In 1622 it is incorrectly given as Mounteney.

[2] He married the youngest daughter of Sir John Corbett, and was grandfather to William, Earl of Bath. Corbett, as we shall see, was a resident in St James's Street.

For some years Mrs Poulteney and Mr Baldwin appear to have had no neighbours, but in 1609 one Walker is added to them. Ten years later a Mr Henn and a Mr Hunt join them, both of whom are found continuing for a number of years. In 1621 it is interesting to find the name of Waller for the first time, although this could hardly have been the poet (he was only born in 1605), who, however, did subsequently live in St James's Street, as we shall see. In 1627 we have a John Gladston given as residing in this quarter, and an interesting name for the following year is that of Mr Richard Middleton, with whom we find, for the first time, the Earl of Berkshire. In 1629 "Sir Archibald Dowglass Kt." appears, and in 1632, Lord Aston. A certain Crofts, whose presence has been for some time indicated, blossoms into Sir W. Crofts in 1634.

The Rate Books prove pretty conclusively not only the growing population of St James's Street but also the fashionable character it was assuming. Sir Ralph Clare, in 1635, is joined in the following year by Sir John Bingley, who, as Lord Andover, is found in succeeding entries. The number of residents about this time seems to have been from fifteen to seventeen. In 1641 we find, besides Lord Berkshire and Sir R. Clare, Pulteney and Henn, Sir David Cunningham, the Earl of Danby and Lord Gorringe. Three years later (1644), owing, no doubt, to the outbreak of the Civil War, the number of inhabitants has dwindled to eight: Henn (become Sir Henry Henn), Sir John Corbett and Sir Thomas Peyton among them. To these, in 1645, is added the Earl of Lincoln; and, in

1646, Lady Lumley, Lord Reynolds, Lord Howard, and a certain Captain Scares who pays six shillings for a garden. The only new name of note in 1647 is that of Lord Skydimore, and Captain Scares is found entered as "Capt. Scares for old Perkins his garden house," probably a tenement on the as yet only sparsely built-over west side of the road.

In 1648 the new names are those of Lady Lumley and the Countess of Carlisle, who are joined in the following year by Lord "Raynalow" (*sic*), that nobleman paying one pound in rates and becoming later Lord "Ranylough."[1] A little later, about the year 1652, we are first, I think, able to distinguish to some extent on which side of the roadway the people mentioned in the Rate Books resided. The supposition is only relative, and I give it with all reservation. Thus for the year mentioned I incline to place Michael Poulteney, Sir John Corbett, Lord Raynalaugh and Mr John Hooke, with the Earl of Berkshire, at the bottom of the roadway, on the west side, and Mr Champion Lane, Mr Kynollis, Lieut.-Col. Mason and Lady Pickering on the east. There is the added probability, by this arrangement, that Pickering Place takes its name from the fact of its running into what was once the property or temporary residence of the last-named tenant or owner. In 1654 a new name appears—one Mr Richardson—but he could hardly have been an acquisition, at least not in a monetary way, to the authorities, as against him is significantly written: "Will not pay." As he subsequently disappears, he apparently could not be made to, and was turned out. In the following year the name of Waller again appears, this time indicating the poet, who is given as "Waller Esq." in 1658, and as "Edmund

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[1] Lord Ranelagh was living at No. 7 St James's Square from 1678 to 1693, and is found at No. 13 in 1694; see Dasent's *St James's Square.*

Waller Esq."[1] in 1659, being then domiciled "In the Pavement," which I imagine was that part of the east side which had by now been formed into something more analogous to the modern street than the rough and ready earlier road could be said to be.

As a matter of fact, although St James's Street is stated by various topographers to have been formed in 1670, it dates from at least ten years earlier. The Rate Books for 1658 give the names of inhabitants under the general heading of "St James's." In the following year no name of district or street (so far as these particular names are concerned) is entered, but in 1660 we find the heading "St James's Street." From this the deduction is fairly obvious that the roadway was made into a regular street in or about 1659, or just eleven years earlier than has hitherto been assumed. The fact that by a Statute of 13 & 14 Charles II. (1661-1662) St James's Street was ordered to be paved, not only proves that the street had already been formed, but also indicates that it was then regarded as a potentially important thoroughfare. In this connection it is interesting to remember that John Evelyn was one of the Commissioners for the improvement of the streets, and under date of 31st July 1662 thus refers to the matter: "I sate with ye Commiss^{rs} about reforming buildings and streetes of London, and we ordered the paving of the way from St James's North, which was a quagmire, and also of the Hymarket about Pigadillo [Piccadilly], and agreed upon instructions to be printed and published for the better keeping the streetes cleane."

I may mention here that Hare[2] and others have stated that at first St James's Street was known as "The Long Street." I have been at some pains to verify this statement, but confess to have been baffled. I can find no indication in the Rate Books or elsewhere of the fact. Nor does there seem any adequate reason why this particular thoroughfare should have been popularly so called. It is not specially lengthy; even compared with other then existing streets, it hardly merited this distinctive title. If an adjective was required to designate a new thoroughfare, in this case "steep" would have been far more natural and descriptive.

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[1] He is then rated at sixteen shillings.

[2] *Walks in London.*

We may thus date the formation of St James's Street from the year 1659 and allow its proper and present name to have been given it at its inception. Officially this was evidently so, although I am not prepared to deny that some individuals may have called it The Long Street, or that such a title may appear in some contemporary document with which I am unacquainted.

Assuming, then, the formation of St James's Street in 1659, we have the interesting fact that the notable year of Restoration, 1660, marks the first year of the new street's existence. By the Rate Books we find, too, Edmund Waller, who is so identified, practically, with the return of sovereignty in England, given on an increased scale of rating: one pound instead of sixteen shillings. We are also first able to identify Sir William Pulteney's house, which stood just before Stable Yard, going up the street, or, roughly, about ten houses from Cleveland Row on the west side. Some new names also appear: Lord Hughson (who is first entered in 1658) Thomas Eliott, Madame Tagg, Madame London, and Madame Palmer (whom one would like to identify with Barbara Villiers, who married Roger Palmer in 1658, joined the Court of Charles II. in Holland in the following year, and returned in his train at the Restoration, and not improbably took up her residence in St James's Street in order to be near her royal admirer's palace), and Major Gibbons, who was, doubtless, the proprietor of the famous "Gibbons's Tennis Court," in Vere Street, Clare Market.

In the year 1663 I find but nine names given in the Rate Books as representing the residents in St James's Street; in 1671 there are no fewer than twenty-eight. Among the latter we find on the east side those of Col. Thomas Howard, Mr Clutterbrooke, Sir Peter Collaton and Lady Bassett; on the west, Sir John Duncombe and Sir Allan Apsley (both well-known men and subsequently residents in St James's Square), and Lady Danvers. By another dozen years a still further increase is found, to the extent of thirty-nine names. Among them are Lady Pike, Sir John Fenwick and Lady Burlard (all entered at two pounds), and Lady Scrope, who pays three pounds.

The street was now well established and, as Strype is fond of phrasing it, "well inhabited." Its subsidiary outlets, too, had mostly come into existence: King Street was formed in 1673, although it was not till the nineteenth century that what was at first but a passage-way into St James's Street was enlarged into a regular roadway; Jermyn Street dates from 1667; Ryder Street from 1674; Park Place was just being formed (1683), and Bennet Street and St James's Place were to come, respectively in 1689 and 1694. On the other hand there were many small courts and alleys, which have now disappeared, on both sides of the way, and these we shall come to in our perambulation in a later chapter. Suffice it to say here that on the east side, from north to south, were Villiers Court, Crown and Sceptre Court, Fox Court, Gloucester Court and Pickering Place, besides other unnamed openings which gradually came into existence; and on the west side, Stable Yard, far more fashionably inhabited than its name would suggest, and running out of the main street between Park Place and St James's Place; and Little St James's Street and Thatched House Court, south of the latter turning.

I need not, now, follow the Rate Books further, as I shall refer to them when speaking of the interesting inhabitants of St James's Street and its tributary outlets; but it is curious, in going through these old records, to note the uncertain way in which names are set down, and the exceedingly unbusinesslike manner in which the collectors seem to have gone about their rounds. Some are found doing this with a certain amount of method, but, as a rule, system is not their strong point. Some of them have taken the trouble to state on which side of the way the people lived; but this is not often the case until we come to later and more systematised entries. So far as I can gather, the usual rule was to begin at the south-west corner of the street and progress up it to the north corner of Park Place, then to cross over to the south corner of Ryder Street and continue down on the east side. As for many years the west side was unbuilt over beyond Park Place, there is reason for their leaving this large corner unnoticed; but I cannot understand their ignoring the opposite north-east side, unless it be that it was taken, in a haphazard kind of way, together with the portion of Piccadilly on which it abutted.

As to the sketchy way in which names are spelt, that is less to be wondered at when one considers that the collectors were hardly likely to be better spellers than the educated people of the period. It thus happens that we get Lord Brunkhard for Lord Brouncker; Lady Burly Lace for Lady Borlase; and Edward, as often as Edmund, Waller; Sir Peter Collaton is sometimes Sir Peter Collington and sometimes Sir Peter Colleton; while it was a good many years before the Pulteney family got its surname correctly given.

In the year 1685 we find *Edward* Waller rated at twelve pounds, his house being evidently on the east side of the street. In those days Stable Yard, opposite, was a *cul-de-sac* of not very important houses, judging from the fact that the rates on them ranged from ten shillings down to two shillings. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, much rebuilding had taken place here, with the result that the residences in this court became fine houses and were occupied by fashionable people, as we may see by Kip's plan of 1710-1720, and by the names of the inhabitants in the Rate Books. Even earlier than this, notwithstanding the small rateable value placed on them, the houses in Park Place and the other turnings out of St James's Street seem to have shared the ever-increasing popularity of the main thoroughfare as a desirable place of abode. This we shall see more particularly when we come to deal with these tributary streets. In St James's Street itself, on the west side, we find the Earl of Castlehaven's name for the first time in 1686, in addition to many of those previously mentioned. In the following year Waller's Christian name, Edmund, is given correctly; but in 1688 it disappears, the poet having died (at Beaconsfield) on 21st October of the previous year. In 1695 Sir Cæsar Oranmore, Sir John Fenwick, Sir James How and Lady Bellasis are given as residents.

Among other clues to past residents we have Philip Musgrave, in 1688; Lord Townshend, in 1748; Sir Robert Wilmot, in 1754 onwards; W. Gerard Hamilton, in 1763; and Governor Thomas Hutchinson, in 1775, either writing from, or being addressed at, their lodgings or own houses in St James's Street.

As we know, besides private houses there were several famous chocolate- and coffee-houses in St James's Street about this period, and these, no doubt, did no little in turning the attention of commercial enterprise to the thoroughfare.

So early as 1686 we find Messrs Nickson and Welch, on the east side; and Richard Russell, at The Cock, reminds us that taverns were not absent.[1] Here and there are names, too, which suggest the lodging-house keeper, cheek by jowl with names that are historic or at least were famous in their day.

Some ten years later we find the Terrace first mentioned in the Rate Books for 1697, appearing in this entry: "Lord Arundell —— Terrace." It is somewhat difficult to identify the exact position of this terrace. From certain internal evidence in the Rate Books I am inclined to think it was on the east side, and, as we shall see from Strype, it was at the upper end of the street; and that it was a raised pavement before certain houses, for convenience of entering the then highly slung coaches and also to avoid the splashing incident to the almost perpetual badness of even the most fashionable streets at that period.

The gradual development of St James's Street is shown by the appearance, in the Rate Book records, of new courts without any further distinguishing title than "A Court," "New Passage," etc. A Mr Stroud lived, in 1695, on the west side; so we have the alley abutting on his house, given as Stroud's Court—a name that has not survived. Russell's Court is another that has disappeared (it was formerly on the west side, running into Cleveland Row), as have Villiers Court, between Piccadilly and Jermyn Street; Crown and Sceptre Court and Fox Court, between the latter thoroughfare and Ryder Street (the west end of which was then called Little Rider Street), and Gloucester Court, between King Street and Pickering Court. In fact, the last named is one of the few of these little outlets that have survived successive building developments, and as such is of particular interest, as it is (we shall see later) for other reasons.

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[1] The King Head, for instance, was next door (south) to the present White's Clubhouse; and at "The Bunch of Grapes," on the west side, "extraordinary good cask Florence wine at 6s. a gallon" was sold in 1711, according to an advertisement of that date.

Some of these courts no doubt took their names from adjacent signs belonging to taverns or business premises, such as Crown and Sceptre Court, Blue Ball Yard, Fox Court, Catherine Wheel Yard. In 1685 King Street is still designated "in the Fields," a reminiscence of the St James's Fields which died hard in a neighbourhood which was then recently more or less rural.

As to what were the taverns in St James's Street at the close of the seventeenth century it is difficult to say. We know with certainty of the Poet's Head, the poet probably being Dryden; also of the Horse-Shoe Ale House, because in the Vernon MS. a certain Simon Weld, evidently a spy, reports hearing one Cox, a plumber, speaking favourably of James II. here in 1694. Weld, in the course of his "business," frequented such resorts, but his incidental mention of The Goal, and The Dolphin and Crown, "a cook shop," do not interest us, as these places were merely *near* St James's Street. A "Fox" is also traceable, apart from Fox Court already referred to, as Captain Scott, in his *Dixonary of Persons in France* (1695-1696, Jan. 18), mentions that a Mrs Middlegast[1] in St James's Street, "next door to the Fox," befriended him on one occasion. Whether The Dog and Duck, at which sign a Mr Clement lodged with one Chasie, and there received a letter from Rouen, dated 18th October 1722,[2] was a tavern or not is uncertain. There was a well-known inn with this sign in Hertford Street, Mayfair, and a notorious one in St George's Fields, so their name may possibly have been attached to a tavern in St James's Street.

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[1] Evidently a lodger, as I cannot trace her in the Rate-Books.

[2] Historical Manuscripts Commission.

In addition to the Rate Books, some further information of a more or less general kind concerning the earlier history of St James's Street can be gleaned from the Calendar of State Papers and the Historical Manuscripts Commission. In the earlier entries in the former of these authorities we shall find nothing more particular to our purpose than what is entered under the heading of St James's Fields, so that when, for instance, John Sharpe is mentioned as owning a house in St James's Fields in 1630, or when, five years later, Archibald Lumsden is granted the sole right to sell "Malls," balls and scoops "and other necessaries for the game of Pall Mall," within his grounds in St James's Fields, we can only assume such and similar entries to refer generally to the area on which St James's Square and its adjacent thoroughfare stand, and only possibly to that western portion which is now St James's Street. But even if it cannot be proved that such references are actually connected with the embryo thoroughfare, at the same time they deal with its immediate neighbourhood, and one or two of them, for this reason, as well as for their intrinsic interest, deserve record here.

Thus, on 11th July 1603 we find an order for deferring St James's Fair, then held in the open space near St James's Palace, and afterwards in St James's Market, on account of the Plague; and, again, on 12th June 1636, being put off, it then being "held on St James's Day, near his Majesty's house at St James's."

In 1665 we know that this fair, which was carried on "in the road near the House of St James's," but whether in Pall Mall or St James's Street is a question (I rather incline to the former), was ordered to be transferred to St James's Market. It had become a nuisance to the royal residence, and thus may have extended to the junction of Pall Mall and St James's Street.

In Strype's time it had blossomed into the Mayfair of many stories, having been transferred, according to that authority, to "the road leading to Tyburn."

So much for the fair, which only indirectly interests us here. Return we to the Calendar of State Papers, where, under date of 26th October 1638, I find a communication from Inigo Jones to the Council, in which the great architect reports that, "according to your order of the 19th inst. concerning the divisions made in several parts of St James's Fields, and a bridge of bricks begun for the passage of carts into the said field, I have spoken with Archibald Lumsdale [Lumsden, mentioned before], the tenant, and showed him your order for demolishing the bridge, &c., all of which he has undertaken shall be done by Thursday next."

An entry more directly bearing on our subject is the following:—"Aug. 14th, 1656. Order for staying of building in Lincoln's Inn Fields and St James's Fields. Gabriel Beck to see to this," as it is probable that part of that building was the development of St James's Street itself, which, as we have seen, first appears as a regular street about three years later.

The forming of the street naturally required that the water supply should be put on a proper footing, and on 16th May 1664 we accordingly have the "Petition of Fras: Williamson and Ralph Wayne to the King, for leave to convey to the inhabitants of Piccadilly, St James's Fields, Haymarket and the neighbourhood, water from springs which they have found near, they compounding with the inhabitants at reasonable rates, on account of the great expense they have been at in the new invention of an engine which by perpetual motion will drain level or mines, though 50 fathoms deep, for which they have already a licence." They duly received the required powers, as is shown by an entry of 25th June of the same year. On the previous 31st May another entry referring to the same subject is interesting as introducing the name of one of the earliest inhabitants in St James's Street: "Certificate to Sir W. Pulteney, that Mr Williamson and Mr Wayne have agreed with him for the use of the springs near Piccadilly which he holds for the Earl of St Albans; that the work will be very useful, and that there will be no occasion to come on any man's land excepting the Earl's, who consents thereto."

In July 1672 we have the first mention by name of St James's Street in the Calendar of State Papers. It runs thus: "Grant to Sir John Duncombe, in fee simple, of four messuages with their gardens in St James's Street, county of Middlesex, in reversion after the determination of the existing leases thereof." Two years later a warrant of 18th August, after reciting gifts of King's land in St James's to Lord St Albans, proceeds: "The said warrant also directs a grant to be made to my lord and Col. Villiers of the inheritance of 19 small tenements in St James's Street looking into St James's Park." The Colonel Villiers here mentioned is the gentleman after whom Villiers Court was named. When the warrant speaks of the nineteen tenements "looking into St James's Park," it is clear that these houses were on the west side of the street and abutted on what is now the Green Park, but which, in those days, was part and parcel of St James's Park. It is sometimes found referred to as the Upper Park, St James's, and also as Upper St James's Park.

Two other entries of a later period, in the State Papers, are also of interest: one, dated 27th January 1690, reveals the existence of a pillory in St James's Street, in connection with one Peter Roman having been sentenced to stand there, but whose punishment, for some reason or other, was subsequently remitted. It is not quite clear where this pillory stood; when it was set up; or when removed. It may possibly have been but a temporary erection and was in all probability fixed at the bottom of St James's Street. At this period Jacobites were busy concocting schemes for the restoration of the exiled king, and as St James's is known to have been a hotbed of sedition then and later, when the Stuart cause was again to the front, the pillory may have been erected for such breakers of the law. An entry in the State Papers for 15th August 1691 has, I think, some bearing on this matter. It runs thus: "Caveat that no pass be granted to Charles Caldecote, an infant about 15 years of age, till notice be given to Madame Cartwright at Mr Huddleston's house in St James's Street." Tristram Huddlestone is given as living on the west side, two doors from Stable Yard, in the Rate Books for 1685, and he had, later, as neighbour, Sir John Fenwick.[1] Both these names have such a Jacobite ring about them that they may fitly introduce certain references to such disloyal people who, in those days, resided in or frequented St James's Street.

In the Buccleuch MSS.[2] we find allusions to the Nag's Head in St James's Street as being coupled curiously with the Prince of Orange's Head in Jermyn Street, as a resort of Jacobite plotters at the close of the seventeenth century; and, later, letters from disaffected people can be traced to St James's Street and its neighbourhood. It is probable, therefore, that the pillory was kept fairly well supplied with tenants at a period when spies were rampant, and must have taken more than usual trouble to run to earth malcontents at the very gates of the royal palace. We know that on the death of Queen Anne, Atterbury offered to go down in front of St James's Palace, in full

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[1] See later, for account of Fenwick.

[2] Historical Manuscripts Commission.

Episcopal dress, and proclaim James III. as king,[1] and how, when the Tory ministry hesitated, the Bishop deplored, in anything but Episcopal language, the loss of an opportunity which he regarded as in the highest degree favourable to the Pretender's cause. Atterbury knew his London well and, no doubt, was cognisant of the strong Tory feelings of the inhabitants of St James's Street and its vicinity.

When George I. had been safely proclaimed and innumerable arrests of disaffected people were taking place, one of the houses visited was Ozinda's Chocolate House at the bottom of the thoroughfare, near the Palace, and the inhabitants saw with no little alarm Mr Ozinda led away captive, followed by Captain Forde and Sir Richard Vivyan, two well-known *habitués* of the place.

Having traced in a more or less general way the early development of St James's Street, by the aid of the plans, Rate Books, Calendar of State Papers and other sources, which can, however, only be regarded as, at best, indirect information, let us see what later London topographers and cartographers have to say about it. In the case of such authorities Stow always takes precedence. In the present instance, of course, this can hardly be, as Stow never knew St James's Street as such, although he may possibly have wandered along the then rural road which ran roughly over its present tracks. But Strype's edition of Stow, brought down to the eighteenth century, suffers under no such disabilities, and consequently we find not only mention of the thoroughfare but some extremely interesting and valuable references to it in the second of those two weighty volumes, which first appeared in 1720, and, in a more complete form, in 1754.

"St James's Street," writes Strype, "beginneth at the Palace of St James's, and runs up to the Road against

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[1] Doran's *London in the Jacobite Times*.

Albemarle Buildings, being a spacious Street, with very good Houses well inhabited by Gentry: At the upper End of which towards the Road are the best, having before them a Terrace Walk ascended by steps, with a Freestone Pavement. Out of this Street, on the West Side, it hath a Passage into these Places, fronting the Pall Mall. A Passage to Cleveland Court, formerly one large House, and called Berkshire House, which being purchased by the Dutchesse of Cleveland, took her name; now severed into several Houses, the chief of which is now inhabited by the Earl of Nottingham; and here are two other small Courts against the Earl of Baths. Then in the said Street is a Yard for Stablings, with some Houses which run down to St James's Park Walls."

From this passage we learn that St James's Street was, in its early days, practically wholly a residential thoroughfare; we also observe that the Terrace, where we have seen from the Rate Books that Lord Arundel was living in 1697, was at the Piccadilly end of the street, and that steps led to it from the roadway. There were, as we know, several courts out of St James's Street on the east side; but the one specifically mentioned by Strype as leading into places fronting the Pall Mall was probably Little King Street, the buildings on the south side of which abutted on the backs of the houses in Pall Mall, as they now do.

The difficulty about tracing any particular West End street in early books on London is that, in the first place, the writers generally restrict their investigations to churches, public buildings and the general history of the city, and content themselves with but a bare mention of the streets; and, secondly, that when they do enlarge on these we find only streets in the east or central part of London dealt with, the western area being then but recently built, and thus not being deemed, apparently, worthy of an antiquary's notice. The consequence is that the early history of St James's Street is, at best, vague and scrappy. Here and there we get glimpses, so to speak, of it, however; and with these we must, perforce, be content. Thus, the Sieur de la Serre, a learned gentleman who came over to this country in the suite of Marie de Medicis in 1638, in speaking of St James's Palace, remarks that "its great gate has a long street in front, reaching almost out of sight, seemingly joining to the fields." This passage is interesting, as it is the earliest reference we have to St James's Street as a roadway.

In Norden's *Notes on London and Westminster*, dated 1592, we get a vignette of the place under more rural conditions, for, describing St James's Palace, the topographer says: "It standeth from other buyldinges, about 2 furlonge, *saving a ferme house opposite agaynste the north gate*," and, he adds, the prospect on the north is over "grene feeldes." The mention of the farm is particularly interesting, as it may possibly be identical with the buildings which stood at the south-east corner of St James's Street and formed the nucleus of the building development in that thoroughfare. The open fields spoken of by Norden are indicated in Hollar's view of St James's Palace as it appeared so much later as 1660, although by that time some of its rural character must have departed at the advent of houses and the formation of the street proper, the Statute of 13 & 14 Charles II., dated 1661-1662, already referred to, proving that man was here already obliterating nature.

The fine series of London maps which we possess helps us to some extent, although not so much as one could wish, in tracing the gradual development of St James's Street. We have already alluded to Wyngaerde's plan, which is, at best, in this connection, but an uncertain guide. In Faithorne's plan, dated 1658, however, we see, for the first time, St James's Street well defined. By this we observe Berkshire House at the south-west corner of the thoroughfare, with its gardens running a little more than half-way up the street, the remaining portion on the west side being part and parcel of the Park. On the east side, opposite Berkshire House, at the south-east corner, a range of buildings extends up the street for a distance equal to about a third of the length of Berkshire House and its gardens. The remainder of the ground on this side is shown as open fields (St James's Fields), bounded by Piccadilly on the north and the Haymarket on the east. At the south end of these fields a double row of trees runs parallel with Pall Mall, and above them are written the words " Pall Mall," which, I imagine, indicates that here the game was then played. Porter's smaller plan, dated 1660, is practically identical with Faithorne's, except (which does not, however, really concern us) that behind the double row of trees a wooden paling, running their entire length and passing through about the centre of St James's Square, is shown.

By the time Morden and Lea issued their large and elaborate plan in 1682, the appearance of St James's Street had greatly altered. Taking first the west side, we find the grounds of Berkshire House entirely covered with houses, the remaining portion on the north, however, being still part of St James's Park (now the Green Park) before the formation of Bennet and Arlington Streets (1689) which were built on that part of this vacant land granted by Charles II. to Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, by deed, dated 6th February 1681.[1]

On the east side of St James's Street we see, by Morden and Lea, that houses had by now been erected along its entire length; but although King Street and Jermyn Street are shown, there is no connection indicated between them and St James's Street. We know, however, that in both cases a narrow passage joined them, this passage being enlarged into the present continuation of the thoroughfare. In 1682 the west portion of Jermyn Street was called Little St Jermyn Street and the east Great St Jermyn Street. In nearly every case the houses shown by Morden and Lea have a space, probably a court or garden, between their frontages and St James's Street. This would account for Pickering Place not being marked, as that court only came into existence apparently when rebuilding brought the houses right up to the street, and any of the older ones left standing behind were connected with it by such alleys. This raises the interesting point: that we may, I believe, regard the house in Pickering Court, *facing* the entrance, as one of those originally standing in St James's Street itself. Crown Court (no longer existing, but then situated between Pickering Court and what is now King Street) is shown and rather confirms what I suggest.

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[1] Lord Arlington sold this land, the same year, to a Mr Pym, who apparently formed the streets, and himself occupied, for many years, the largest house in Arlington Street. See *Lives of the Norths*, vol. iii., p. 210.

From Kip's *quasi* bird's-eye view of London, published in 1710-1720, we are able to judge, more or less, of the effect produced by the completely built-over street—that is, so far as concerns the fronts of the houses on the east and the backs of those on the west side. We see the passage into King Street, but hardly as narrow as is usually supposed; indeed, Kip makes it look like a continuation of the thoroughfare as it is to-day. The garden, of which we have not only written record, but a special picture, at the back of the premises occupied by White's Club, on the west side, is clearly shown, as are the houses in St James's Place (Stable Yard then), a street then running straight to the Park wall, with gardens behind those on the south side. The houses in St James's Street itself are of regular elevation, most of them having mansard roofs; one, at the south-east corner of the thoroughfare, seems to have the indication of a sign hanging before it, although in the engraving it is not very clearly defined, and it is quite impossible to distinguish what it represents.

By the time we reach Rocque's famous map (1741-1745) we find the street in a matured state and its tributary thoroughfares, as they exist to-day, clearly marked.

There is one plan about which I must say a word, because it directly concerns my subject, and also because it shows very clearly the division of the two parishes through which St James's Street runs. This is the plan of the parish of St George's, Hanover Square, dated 1725, and now in the possession of the Vestry, which caused it to be reproduced in 1880. By it we see that the whole of St James's Street is in the parish of St James's, except that portion of the west side extending from Piccadilly to Park Place (the line of demarcation running along the front of the houses in the thoroughfare, turning into Park Place and continuing in a straight line to the Park wall, from which point it turns northward, skirting the wall until it reaches Piccadilly, when it proceeds westward along the railings of the Green Park), which is in the parish of St George's, and forms a square cut out of the neighbouring parish; in which square are Arlington and Bennet streets and the houses on the north side of Park Place.

The outlines of the parish of St James's are thus given in the Statute which confirmed them. The parish then comprehended "all the houses and grounds, including a place heretofore called St James's Fields, and the confines thereof, beginning at a house at the south side of the east end of Catherine (alias Pall Mall) street; the south of the roadway, called Tyburn road, westward, to a house, being the sign of the Plough, at the north-west corner of a lane, called Mary-le-bone Lane, including the said house;

and from thence proceeding southward, on the east side of the lane to the north-west corner of Crabtree Fields, comprehending the same; and the ground from thence westward, to the north-west corner of Ten Acre Field, in the occupation of Richard, Earl of Burlington, or his assigns, including that field, and the highway between the same; and the garden wall of the said Earl of Burlington, to the north-west corner of the said garden wall, including that garden, and the mansion house of the said Earl of Burlington, fronting Portugal Street. Towards St James's House, to the middle channel on the south side of a new street called Park Place,[1] comprehending all the east side of St James's Street to St James's House, and all the west side thereof, from the said middle downwards, as far as the same extends, and including the south side of Park Place to Cleveland gardens, comprehending the same, and Cleveland House, and out-buildings; and also the street which leads from the outward gate of the said house, and thence to the said Pall Mall street, comprehending all the buildings and yards backward to the wall, which encloses part of St James's Park, which hath been lately made into a garden, extending to a house inhabited by Anthony Verrio, painter; and the late Leonard Girle, gardener; and from thence to the house and garden of Thomas, Earl of Sussex, including the same, together with the south side of Warwick street to the White Hart Inn there."

When, in 1725, the parish of St George's, Hanover Square, was formed, it took in (as I have pointed out) the west side of St James's Street, from Piccadilly to Park Place, the boundary line running through the middle of the latter and passing straight through to the Green Park, where it returned northwards along the walls of the gardens belonging to the houses in Arlington Street up to Piccadilly again. The section of the plan of the parish, dated 1725, here given will illustrate this.

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[1] Formed 1683.

This chapter may suitably be concluded with the following reference to St James's Street as it was at this period, together with a letter facetiously indicative of its *désagrémens* half-a-century earlier, taken from Malcolm's *Anecdotes*, published in 1810:—

"As St James's Street now is, nothing can be more convenient than the gradual declination from Piccadilly to the Palace. That the houses on each side of the way have been almost entirely rebuilt since the year 1765, will pretty plainly appear from the ensueing lively paper inserted in 'The London Chronicle,' Aug. 15, 1765:

"'We have read a great deal in your paper about Liberty, Mr Printer; give me leave to say a word or two about Property, which, talk as they please, the greatest part of mankind reckon the most valuable of the two. Our sensible forefathers, in framing the Streets of this great City, preferred utility to ornament; and, in St James's Street, they were very industrious, that the paving of that uneven ground should not prejudice the property of any individual.—Their wiser sons have wished to reverse this practice, and have been full as industrious in conforming the buildings to the Scotch paving. The descent from the upper to the lower end of this street being so very steep, has brought very whimsical distresses upon many of the inhabitants—some of the ground floors, that were almost level with the street, are now eight, nine, and some ten steps, and those very steep, from the ground; while others, to which you used to ascend by three or four steps, are now as many below the surface. Cellars are now above ground and some gentlemen are forced to dive into their own parlours. Many laughable accidents, too, have happened from this new method of turning the world upside down: some persons, not thinking of the late alterations, attempting to knock at their own door, have frequently tumbled up their new-erected steps, while others, who have been used to ascend to their threshold, have as often, for the same reason, tumbled down; and their fall had been the greater, from their lifting up their legs to ascend as usual. An old gouty friend of mine complains heavily; he has lain, he says, upon the ground-floor for these ten years, and he chose the house he lives in because there was no step to the door; and now he is obliged to mount at least nine, before he can get into his bedchamber, and the entrance into his house is at the one pair of stairs. A neighbour, too, complains he has lost a good lodger, because he refused to lower the price of his first floor, which the gentleman insisted he ought, as the lodgings are now up two pair of stairs. Many of the street doors are not above five feet high; and the owners, when they enter their houses, seem as if they were going into a dog-kennel rather than their own habitations. To say the truth, no fault can be imputed to the trustees: but many are great sufferers; and this method of making the houses conform to the ornamental paving, is something like the practice of Procrustes, the robber, who made a bed of certain dimensions, and whoever was put into it, had his legs cut shorter if they were too long, or stretched out if they were too short, till the poor wretch was precisely of the length with the bed.

"'I am, Sir, Yours &c.

"'ANTI-PROCRUSTES.'"

II

EAST AND WEST SIDES OF STREET

I. THE EAST SIDE OF THE STREET

As we have seen, the earliest erections in St James's Street were on the east side, and consisted of the row of low-built houses which ran up from the south-east corner opposite the gardens of Berkshire House. I have mentioned that in Kip's Plan of 1710 the corner house appears to have a sign hanging from its front. Although it is not clear what this represents, I think we may assume from the position of the building at the street corner that it was in all probability the sign of a tavern. This being so, conjecture can, perhaps, identify it with the Poet's Head, which was kept by one Edward Smith, who duly issued a token in the year 1693. As this token exhibits a head crowned with bays it has been assumed that it perpetuates the features of Dryden. At the same time we may suppose that any representation of a poet would have borne this distinctive characteristic; and a better reason for its being identified with Dryden is the fact that, at this period, he was the great literary figure in London and was more likely to be selected as a "sign" than any other bard.

In 1691 another tradesman issued a token in St James's Street, notably one Robert Noris, a glover, whose trade-mark was, appropriately, a glove. I am inclined to place his shop somewhere at the lower end of the street, on the east side; but greater particularity is impossible.

In the year 1793 No. 3 St James's Street is given as being in the occupation of Messrs Brown & Willes. Later

C. Berry's name appeared over the doorway (with its fanlight), flanked by two Georgian windows, as it appears in a caricature dated 1810, and redolent of those Regency days which Deighton and others have so well perpetuated. The premises next door, No. 2, were at this time kept by Thomas Williams, china-man. No. 4, until a few years since the well-known business premises of Mr Francis Harvey, the book and print seller, so familiar to what the French call *amateurs* in fine books and extra illustrated editions, as well as in prints and engravings, was in 1740 the home of William Pickering, a prosperous merchant, who acquired much of the adjoining property and whose name is perpetuated in Pickering Place, one of the most interesting byways in the West End of London. It was Pickering who employed Francis Hayman, the portrait painter, to decorate his private rooms in this house, with frescoes representing scenes from *Don Quixote* (since destroyed). After Pickering No. 4 came into the occupation of James Neild, who is given as living here in Kent's *Directory* for 1792. In a later chapter I shall return to Neild, and his eccentric son, who was born in this house and whose bequest of £50,000 to Queen Victoria in 1852, has largely helped to make his name famous. In the *Patent Directory* of 1793 Mr Neild, senior, is entered as a "silversmith."

Two notable names appear in an abstract of title, dated 1710, of these premises. I need only give the extract which relates to "all that annual Fee Farm Rent of £80 arising out of divers pieces and slips of ground then within St James's Parish and late within the Parish of St Martin's in the Fields, granted by letters patent of his late majesty, King Charles 2nd in the 17th year of his reign to Baptist May and Abraham Cowley, in trust for Henry, Earl of St Albans."

Baptist May was the well-known architect, the friend of

John Evelyn and Keeper of the Privy Purse to Charles II.; his combined names survive in Babmaes (or, more properly, Babmay's[1]) Mews, in Wells Street, Jermyn Street. Abraham Cowley was, of course, the famous poet whose name reads strangely in the dry phraseology of a lawyer's office.

An interesting reminder of what the front of No. 4 St James's Street looked like forty odd years ago, is shown by the little etching which George Cruikshank produced for Mr Harvey, which still remains in the possession of his son and successor.

Two doors farther up the street, notably at No. 6, we come to the premises of Messrs Lock, the hatters. In 1793 James Lock's name appears in the *Directory*, and the shop front which most of us know to-day probably looks exactly as it must have done to our forbears when George III. was king.

Next door (No. 7) to Messrs Lock's was, in 1793, the shop of W. Walker, perfumer. As Francis Kelsey, confectioner, is also given as at No. 7, he probably occupied the ground floor, while Walker was upstairs. The James Matthias who kept an ostrich feather warehouse in St James's Street, in 1793, and Mr Richard Wetenhall, a stockbroker, both possibly occupied premises on the same side, at the south end, although no numbers are given in their case.

No. 8 has a far more notable connection, for it was when lodging there, at the close of 1811 and in 1812, that Lord Byron, in his own words, "awoke one morning to find himself famous," after the publication of the second and third cantos of *Childe Harold*. Since those days a story has been added to the house, and it has been otherwise altered, but a large medallion on its front commemorates its connection with the poet. This was not the first time that Byron had lodged here, for so early as 1808 we find him

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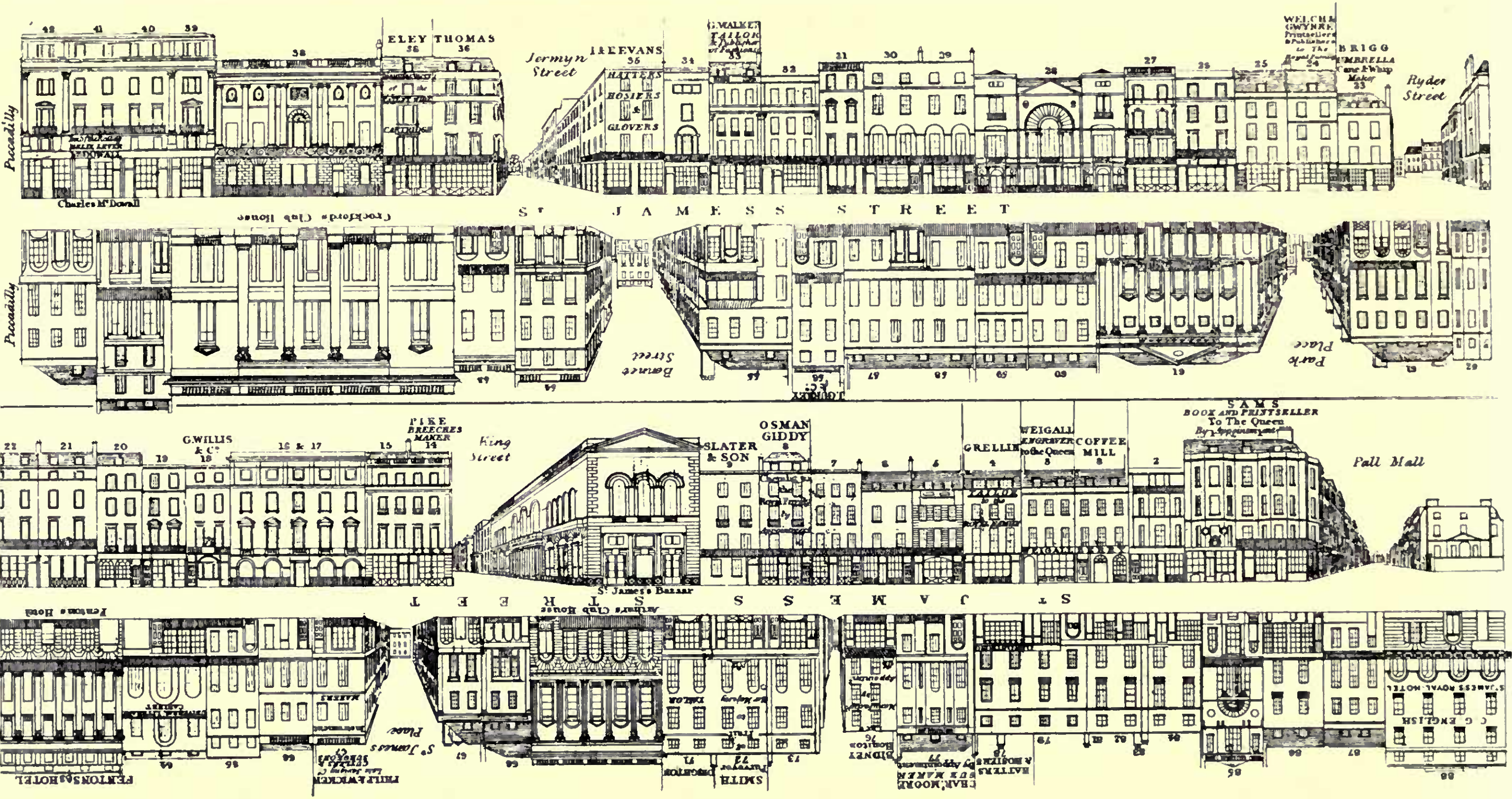
[1] So given by Elmes in his *Topographical Dictionary of London*, 1831.


Piccadilly
Charles McDowall
ELEY THOMAS
Jermyn Street
I. REEVANS
HATTERS HOSIERS & GLOVERS
G. WALKER TAILOR
WELCH & GWYNNE Printsellers & Publishers to The Royal Family
BRIGG UMBRELLA Cane & Whip Maker
Ryder Street
ST JAMESS STREET
Crockford's Club House
Bennet Street
Park Place
PIKE BREECHES MAKER
G. WILLIS & Co
King Street
St James's Bazaar
SLATER & SON
OSMAN GIDDY
GRELLIER
WEIGALL ENGRAVER to the Queen
COFFEE MILL
SAMS BOOK AND PRINTSELLER To The Queen By Appointment
Pall Mall
Fentons Hotel
FENTONS HOTEL
St James's Place
Arthur's Club House
SMITH
SIDNEY
CHAR. MOORE
HATTERS & HOSIERS
C G ENGLISH
ST JAMES'S ROYAL HOTEL

TALLIS'S ELEVATION OF THE EAST AND WEST SIDES OF ST. JAMES'S STREET

at this address, and it was from this house, in 1809, that he went for the first time to take his seat in the House of Lords.

Dallas has left the following account of the incident:—"On that day [March 13th], passing down St James's Street, but with no intention of calling, I saw his chariot at his door, and went in. His countenance, paler than usual, showed that his mind was agitated, and that he was thinking of the nobleman[1] to whom he had once looked for a hand and countenance in his introduction to the House. He said to me: 'I am glad you happened to come in; I am going to take my seat, perhaps you will go with me.' I expressed my readiness to attend him; while, at the same time, I concealed the shock I felt on thinking that this young man, who, by birth, fortune, and talent, stood high in life, should have lived so unconnected and neglected by persons of his own rank, that there was not a single member of the senate to which he belonged, to whom he could or would apply to introduce him in a manner becoming his birth. I saw that he felt the situation, and I fully partook his indignation."[2]

We find letters from Byron, to his mother and others, dated from No. 8, during 1809. At a later period, as we shall see, he was living in Bennet Street.

No. 10, which has recently been converted into the headquarters of Messrs Peters, the carriage builders, but was formerly Rumpelmeyers and before that a club and a coachbuilder's in turn, was in the early days of Queen Victoria's reign the St James's Bazaar, which Crockford had built, looking, as we can see from Tallis's elevation, not unlike it does to-day.

The mention of Tallis brings me naturally to a consideration of this portion of St James's Street as it appears in his *London Street Views*. From this source we see that at that period (roughly, 1835-1840) the corner house, No. 1, was Sams's, the well-known book and print shop. No. 2, previously, as we have seen, the establishment of Thomas Williams, china-man, was occupied by one Hance, a hatter. No. 3, at that time a large, double-fronted establishment, was jointly inhabited by Berry, the grocer, whose sign was the coffee-mill, and Weigall, the engraver. Next door (No. 4, Mr Harvey's) was then Crellins', the tailor. The Imperial Fire and Life Office was at No. 5; Lock's, then as now, at No. 6; at No. 7, Adam, alliteratively described as a bread and biscuit baker; at No. 8, Osman Giddy, a chemist; at No. 9, Slater & Son; and then the St James's Bazaar.

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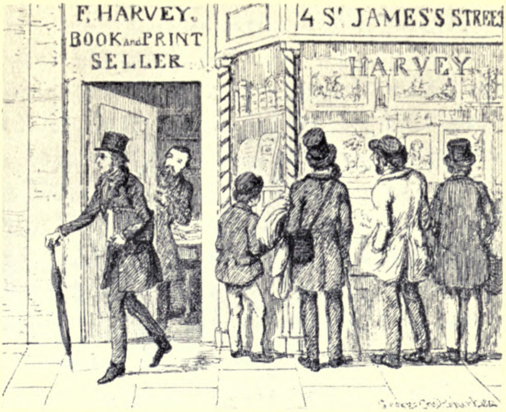
[1] Lord Carlisle.

[2] See Moore's *Life of Byron*.

Most of the elevations of these houses indicate that they had come down from a much earlier day. No. 8 seems to have had a story added to it, but Nos. 1 and 10 are the only ones which show marked evidence of rebuilding.

This particular portion of the roadway is, in some respects, the most interesting, in that it represents the first systematic development of the thoroughfare, and although it contains none of the clubs for which St James's Street is famous, it may be said to form the nucleus of the street.

For this reason it is probable that it was in one of these houses that Maclean, the highwayman, lodged. We know his "diggings" were opposite "White's," at that time a few doors from the end of the street on the west side. Mrs Letitia Pilkington, the friend of Swift, after being separated from her husband, the Rev. Matthew Pilkington, opened a small shop, also opposite White's, and therefore in one of the houses mentioned above. Her venture was not, however, a success, and she was obliged soon after to move into a less fashionable quarter. Another shopkeeper here was Ridley, the bookseller, who made probably more by the sale of Sir John Hill's quack medicines than he did by the dissemination of literature.


F. HARVEY.
BOOK AND PRINT
SELLER
4 ST. JAMES'S STREET
HARVEY
George Cruikshank

NO. 4 ST. JAMES'S STREET
From a drawing by George Cruikshank

EAST SIDE

Continuing our progress up the street, we come to No. 10, which stands at the corner of King Street, which had, when Tallis executed his view, only recently (1830) become a regular thoroughfare, so far as its western end is concerned.

Between King Street and Ryder Street Tallis shows nine houses (Nos. 14 to 22). In the 1793 *Patent Directory*. No. 15 is given as occupied by William Kendall, a glassman. By the by, the No. 12 there set down under the name of William Stinton, grocer, must have disappeared when King Street was extended over the site of the court which formerly connected it with St James's Street. Tallis gives No. 14 in his elevation with the name of Pike, Breeches-Maker, over it; but in his *Directory* ignores it altogether and places Pike at No. 15. Probably the tailor occupied both houses. Hatters seem specially to have favoured St James's Street at this time, and we come to another at No. 16, notably one named Caterer. The next two houses, Nos. 16[1] and 17, formed the large double-fronted building then occupied by the bank of Messrs Herries, Farquhar, Davidson & Co., whose firm, under the name of Sir Robert Herries & Co., is found in the Rate Books for 1785 paying rates on a rental of £150.

At No. 18 we find Willis & Co., tailors; at No. 19, Brumley, glass manufacturer; at No. 20, Nugee, tailor (whom Thackeray mentions, by the by); Nicholls & Housley, silk mercers, at No. 21; and Lewis, silversmith and jeweller, at No. 22.

The houses of this block, between King Street and Ryder Street, are of higher elevation than those lower down, and although some of them, notably Nos. 18, 19 and 20, exhibit characteristically Georgian fronts, the majority have evidently been refaced to suit the taste of a later period.

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[1] Tallis is here contradictory. In his view he gives Nos. 16 and 17 as the bank; but in his *Directory* he places Caterer at No. 16, and the bank at No. 17. Probably, during the preparation of his work, the bank had absorbed Caterer's establishment.

The numbers of the houses forming the next block, between Ryder and Jermyn Streets, run from 23 to 35. In 1793 No. 25 was occupied by one Baux, a shoemaker. Nos. 26 and 27 formed, till recently, the double-fronted shop of Banting, undertaker and upholsterer, whose name is famous in the annals of the anti-fat campaign; William Banting, a man of vast proportions, having adopted the method of reducing his bulk by a meat diet and abstinence from beer, farinaceous foods and vegetables. He died in 1878, aged eighty-two, so that his scheme did not, at any rate, shorten his life. No. 26 was once a noted gambling hell miscalled the Athenæum, and was kept by Messrs Bond, who made a fortune out of the enterprise. No. 28 [1] was inhabited, jointly, by John Abbot, silversmith, and James Turner, jeweller, and No. 33, by William Middleton, mercer and draper.

Tallis shows us Messrs Briggs at No. 23, as they are to-day, and next door Messrs Welch & Gwynne, printsellers and publishers. One Garcia, a fruiterer, has taken Baux's place at No. 25, and No. 26 was then occupied by Charles Jones, gunmaker, and Bromley's auction rooms. Next door to No. 27 comes Boodle's Club, with its beautiful Adams front. Nos. 29, 30 and 31 were respectively occupied by Hummel & Co., hosiers, Bryant, a picture dealer, and Dodd, a tailor. At No. 32 we have another double tenancy, for Tallis gives H. J. M'Clary, librarian and stationer, and Angelo's School of Arms, as being here. A book label which I possess bears the name of Ann M'Clary as being at No. 32, so it is probable that the

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[1] There has been renumbering, for Boodle's was established here in 1765, and in 1877 is given (by Leigh, in his *New Picture of London*), as being at No. 31, while White's, now No. 37, is set down as at No. 43.

H. J. M'Clary was a son of this lady. It was, earlier, at No. 29, then the shop of Miss Humphrey, that the caricatures of Gillray were exhibited, and collected such crowds on the pavement in front. Here the artist himself lodged, and in a fit of insanity ended his life by throwing himself from an upper window. At No. 32, the once well-known bookseller, Robert Triphook, had his shop, over which Cam Hobhouse lodged at one time. Triphook was a kind of literary assistant to Sir Walter Scott, and collected information for him, notably when he was engaged on *The Pirate*. As Hobhouse was the intimate friend of Byron, No. 32 is indirectly identified with the two leading literary men of that period. Of Angelo's famous academy I shall say more in another chapter, but I may state here, that the premises occupied by it were first built as part of Colonel Redham's celebrated riding-school, and were taken by the grandson of the original Angelo in 1830. Angelo's partner, William M'Turk, and his two sons had their *salle d'armes* here later (from 1866).

Next door (No. 33) G. Walker, tailor and habit-maker, carried on his business. Walker seems to have been a pioneer and to have discovered a new method of making trousers, like Mr Goren, in *Evan Harrington*, whom Meredith[1] may have modelled on the St James's Street artist. His advertisement is worth reproducing: "Trousers on a New Principle.—Walker, 33 St James's Street, has discovered an entirely new principle of Cutting Trousers, and offers to furnish the Nobility, Gentry, and the Public, with this important article of dress, admirably adapted to the display of the figure, and at the same time affording such comfort in all exercises as to insure the highest satisfaction to those who honour him with orders. If Art can give ornament to Nature, if any thing can surpass her in the contour of a limb, it is when cloth is made elegantly to fit the same, then it may fairly be admitted that Art has added a charm even to Nature.—G. W. begs to add, that he continues to supply Uniforms for Officers of the Army and Navy, also Deputy Lieutenants' and Court Dresses, in the most tasteful style and at moderate charges for Ready Money."

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[1] By the by, the great novelist himself once lodged in St James's Street, and it would be interesting if it could be established that he did so at No. 33. His own father was, it will be remembered, a tailor.

Next to this great artist, T. I. Mortimer had his gun and pistol manufactory, and at No. 35 (the corner of Jermyn Street) still another firm of hatters appear, notably Messrs I. & F. Evans, who combined a hosiery business with their other branch. The feature of this block of St James's Street is, of course, Boodle's Club-house, which was designed by the Adams and erected by John Crunden about 1765. In 1821-1824 large improvements and additions were made (a new reading-room was one of them) under the direction of J. B. Papworth.[1] Of the other houses between Ryder Street and Jermyn Street I would draw attention to Messrs Briggs', at the corner of the former thoroughfare, as being probably, from its much lower elevation (in Tallis's view) than the rest, a survival of the first buildings erected on this side of St James's Street. To-day everything has, of course, become altered except the front of Boodle's, which remains essentially as it first appeared when the Adams designed it.

From Jermyn Street to Piccadilly the street is numbered from 36, at the north corner of the former thoroughfare, to 42. Among these houses given in the *Patent Directory* for 1793 are No. 37, then occupied by John Wilson, perfumer; No. 38, the shop of Francis Knight & Son, stationers; and No. 41, in the occupation of William Jones, saddler. According to Tallis, the inhabitants in this portion of St James's Street were as follows:—No. 36, a double house, was jointly occupied by Thomas, bootmaker, on the south portion, and Eley, whose premises are described as the "Patent Wire Cartridge Warehouse." It is interesting to read Eley's advertisements, addressed "To Sportsmen," and headed by a diagram showing five birds (presumably grouse) rising amid a shower of shot. This is what Eley has to say about the merits of his patent:

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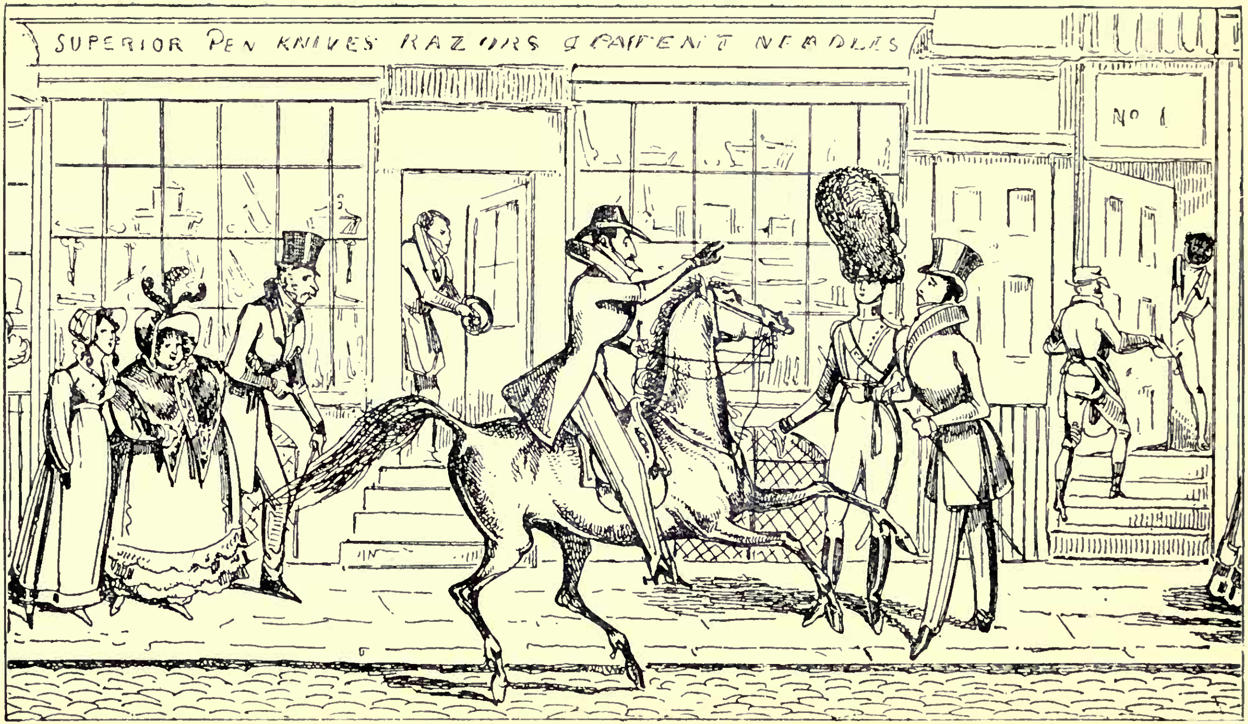
[1] For Boodle's Club, see Chapter VI.

"Eley's patent wire cartridges, for shooting game, &c., at long distances, are warranted to make all guns kill from twenty to forty yards further than a loose charge. They are strongly recommended by the following eminent sporting authors:—Colonel Hawker, author of 'Instructions to Sportsmen'; T. B. Johnson Esq., author of the 'Gamekeeper's Directory,' &c.; Nimrod; J. Oakleigh Esq., author of 'The Oakleigh Shooting Code'; James Tyler Esq., author of 'The Shooter's Manual'; W. Watt Esq., author of 'Remarks on Shooting, in verse.' A prospectus containing the testimonials of the above-named authors, and further information may be had on application at the warehouse, 36 St James's Street. They are well worth the attention of merchants and captains. To be had of all gunmakers."

No No. 37 is given, it obviously being included with No. 38, the famous White's Club-house, about which I shall have a good deal to say later on. No. 39 was then occupied by Messrs Moore & Co., hatters; No. 40 by E. Hogg, military tailor; No. 41, by M'Dowall, watch and clock maker, whose advertisement tells us that he was the inventor of the "Helix Lever and Revolving Endless Gravitating Time Piece, without springs, chains, Barrels, fusees, and keys, and Quiescent Armillary Escape!"

Over the shop of this inventive genius were the York Chambers (also numbered 41), where Campbell the poet once lived, and next door, at the corner of Piccadilly, at No. 42, Barclay had his furrier and hat establishment; premises now rebuilt and occupied by the Union of London and Smith's Bank.

We thus see that, at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign, St James's Street had practically the same character as it enjoys to-day. Then, as now, business establishments occupied most of its houses, a famous bank among them; then, as now, two well-known clubs were here (to-day, by the by, the Sandown Park Club occupying part of No. 4 and the Kempton Park Club at No. 23A are additions). What taverns or coffee-houses there may have been here in earlier days had by then disappeared, such as the King's Head, next to White's, and Parsloe's, which adjoined Pickering Place, in 1796, then carried on by Jane Parsloe and known for its literary associations, where the Johnson Club once held its meetings, and the Chess Club, of which the great Philidor was a member. The elevations of the houses on the east side of the street have been altered for the most part out of all recognition. The two well-known fronts, which are, however, essentially as they were when Tallis made his drawings, are those of White's and Boodle's, and there are one or two houses at the lower end of the street which are of an earlier date. But rebuilding has been rampant. The north and south corners have both been reconstructed, the former especially, on a splendid scale. The bank, whose old front we remember (as it looked in Tallis's plan) has been converted into a fine building and has embraced the formerly separate house at the corner of King Street. The St James's Bazaar has undergone several metamorphoses, although its area has not been extended. Just as brick gave way to stucco under the ægis of Nash, so has stucco now disappeared in favour of stone, and St James's Street is exhibiting evidences of that great rebuilding of London


SUPERIOR PEN KNIVES RAZORS & PATENT NEEDLES
No 1

ST. JAMES'S STREET: LORD PETERSHAM RIDING

which, when completed, should leave it the most beautiful, as it is the largest, city in the world.

II. THE WEST SIDE OF THE STREET

The west side of St James's Street has never had quite the same character as the east. In the first place, just as its tributary streets have always been more residential than those opposite, so the premises in the thoroughfare itself have shared something of this characteristic. There have been, and are, more clubs on this side: White's (in its early days, although one must not forget that it was, first of all, on the east side), The Thatched House, arising out of the tavern of that name, Brooks's, Crockford's, Arthur's, The Cocoa Tree, The Devonshire (Crockford's successor), The New University, The Royal Societies and The Conservative have all been here and nearly all still remain. Unlike the east side, too, it has had its hotels: Fenton's, at No. 63, and the St James's Royal Hotel, kept by English, at No. 88, at the corner of Cleveland Row; Symon's Hotel at Nos. 57 and 58; Ellis's at Nos. 59 and 60, and Graham's at No. 87, next door to English's. The west side has thus had a more residential character than the east; but it has not been quite innocent of business premises. In the *Patent Directory* for 1793, however, I find only one name given between Piccadilly and Bennet Street, notably that of Henry Holland, music-seller, at No. 48, the corner house, which in Tallis's time was occupied by Hoby, the famous bootmaker, and is now absorbed in the splendid offices of the Royal Insurance Company, and where, in 1788, Ozias Humphrey, the miniature painter, lodged. Next door is given in Tallis's *Directory*, as being occupied by the Guards' Club (until recently in Pall Mall and now in Mount Street), and then Crockford's long front (now the Devonshire Club) faces the street till we come to No. 53, then owned and occupied by "Crockford Esq.," the proprietor. Next door to him, and at the corner of Bennet Street, is No. 54, which was formerly the headquarters of another and smaller proprietary club, notably Bond's, afterwards moved to No. 26, on the opposite side.[1] These last two houses have for many years now been Messrs Harper's, coachbuilders, establishment, which, with the Devonshire Club and the Royal Insurance Company, thus occupy jointly the block between Piccadilly and Bennet Street.

Between the latter thoroughfare and Park Place the houses are numbered 55 to 61. Of these the *Directory* of 1793 gives the former as being in the occupation of John Thomas, goldsmith. By about 1835-1840, Richards, a chemist, had replaced Thomas here, and next door (No. 56) were J. Gurney & Co., tailors, the remainder of this portion of the street[2] being filled by the double houses occupied by Symon's and Ellis's hotels, and Brooks's Club-house at the corner of Park Place. Tallis gives the club as numbered 61 (it is now No. 60), but crossing Park Place we find the house at its south corner also numbered 61, which is shown as being jointly occupied by R. Payn, wine importer, and Mrs Geary, who kept here her "*Magasin de Nouveautés.*" Next door was J. Lauriere, a jeweller. It was here that the famous Betty had her fruit shop, the rendezvous of the wits and fine gentleman of the period, where the queen of applewomen dispensed opinions on politics as she served out her pears and pineapples. It is safe to say that, for a considerable period, Betty (Mrs Neale was her proper name) was as much an institution of St James's Street as White's or Brooks's. We shall meet with her again in the chapter on famous men and women, where I shall give some further details of her and her customers.

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[1] Mr Wheatley gives Lord Nelson as lodging at No. 54 in 1800; in the same year he went to rooms in Arlington Street.

[2] Nos. 57 and 58 are now the New University Club-house.

Fenton's Hotel at No. 63 was in the street's early days Peyrault's[1] Bagnio, established about 1699, a very fashionable lounge. It is interesting to know that the charge for a cold bath was then two shillings and sixpence, and for a warm one five shillings!

Between these premises and the next house were certain mews. These occupied what, in a plan dated 1825, is termed Stable Yard; in Rhodes' map of 1770 and the Rate Books for 1785, Blue Ball Yard[2]; and in the Rate Books (1685 and *passim*) Stable Yard.

Continuing from the south corner of these mews we have (according to Tallis) Croker's Universal Literary Cabinet at No. 64; Pulford, tailor, at No. 65; a rival of the same trade, in Williamson, next door, and at 67 Philip & Whicker, cutlers and surgeons' instrument makers, at the corner of St James's Place. In this block the Royal Societies Club at No. 63, and the Cocoa Tree Club at No. 64 occupy the site of the Universal Literary Cabinet and its neighbouring house. In 1793 Lloyd Thackeray & Co., wine merchants, were at No. 65.

At the other (south) corner of St James's Place the house is numbered 67 by Tallis (as in the case of 61), and in this building one Robertson carried on the trade of "French Bread and Biscuit Baker." Next door was R. Johnson, sword cutler, evidently a successor to Messrs Bland & Foster, who were carrying on the same business here in 1793. In this year Peter Wirgman is given as jeweller at No. 69, where Johnson once bought a pair of shoe-buckles, by the by; but in Tallis's time that house had been incorporated in Arthur's Club, which comprised both this and the next house (No. 70). At 71, Tallis gives one Haynes, probably a letter of apartments, and Deighton, a tailor. Smith & Co., fruiterers, are at No. 72, where, in 1793, John Jollyfe had had a bookshop, and at No. 73, Halpin, tailor and breeches-maker.

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[1] It is sometimes called Pierault's and sometimes Pero's.

[2] As given in Elmes's *Topographical Dictionary*, 1831.

A very narrow alley shown in Tallis's view is Little St James's Street, which, in Rhodes's plan of 1770, is given as Catherine Wheel Yard, not to be confounded with Little Catherine Wheel Yard, which was at the bottom of the street and ran into Cleveland Row.

No. 76 St James's Street, at the south corner of this yard, was occupied during the early years of Queen Victoria's reign by one Boss, a gun-maker, as well as by Miss Bidney, who enjoyed the distinction of being "Honiton Lace Manufacturer to Her Majesty." Two doors off, at No. 74, the Conservative Club is to-day established. Continuing down the street we find, according to Tallis, No. 77 occupied by Charles Moore, gun-maker; No. 78, by Messrs Strong, hatters and hosiers. No. 79, which in 1793 was the shop of another hatter, named Moneys, is found to be occupied by one Mimpress, a jeweller; and next door was the Thatched House Club (now No. 86 [1]), kept by Messrs J. and W. Willis. Nos. 81 to 83 are given by Tallis as the shops of Harrison, tobacconist, Martin, tailor, and Page, wig-maker, respectively; while at No. 84 Fisher, hosier, is found replacing Jane Hatch, jeweller, who was there in 1793. The Albion Club—a proprietary establishment of which little seems to be known—occupied what was then No. 84. Next door (No. 86) was the shop of Messrs G. and J. Cary, map and globe publishers, and at No. 87, Graham's Club-house, a once notable gambling centre, which came to an end in the early forties. It was a great place for whist, and Lord Henry Bentinck is here said to have initiated that particular call for trumps known as the "Blue Peter." With the double-fronted corner house (No. 88), in Tallis's day known as the St James's Royal Hotel and kept by C. G. English, we come to the end of the buildings on the west side of St James's Street.

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[1] C. Dyer, print-seller, is mentioned by J. T. Smith (*Nollekens and his Times*) as carrying on his business at a shop close to this club.

Among them those that stood out architecturally were Crockford's (replaced by the Devonshire Club), Brooks's (still existing practically as it was a hundred years ago),[1] Fenton's Hotel (No. 63), where the Royal Societies Club is now, Arthur's, and English's Hotel which has not long since been massively rebuilt. For the rest, although some of the houses showed signs of rehabilitation, the majority of them bore, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the characteristics, allowing for reconstruction, of an earlier time.

To-day so much rebuilding has taken place on both sides of the street, and is still gradually progressing, that the views given by Tallis (here reproduced) will enable the reader to see at a glance what a metamorphosis the thoroughfare has undergone.

It is always difficult to reconstruct in one's mind the earlier features of a street which has been so much rebuilt as has the thoroughfare under consideration. For instance, it would tax the memory in no slight degree if one tried to remember the outlines of the building which, only the other day, as it seems, gave place to the fine offices of the Royal Insurance Company, at the north-west corner of St James's Street. The houses at that point shown by Tallis had in their turn been rebuilt, so that his elevations are of no assistance. But it so happens that E. J. Gregory, R.A., in his picture of Piccadilly, shows the immediate predecessors, not only of the insurance offices named but also of the equally fine block on the north-west side of the street; for which reason I here reproduce it through the courtesy of *The Studio*, in which publication it appeared.

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[1] Brooks's is specifically referred to by Ralph (*Critical Review of the Public Buildings, etc., of London*) in the following passage:—"St James's Street is much more remarkable for the natural advantages and beauty of the ground, than from any addition it has received from art. The house at the corner of Park Place is well proportioned, and has considerable merit. The palace-gate, notwithstanding its advantageous position at the end of this street, has a very mean appearance."

If Ralph's ghost revisits the glimpses of the moon, it is possible that it would see reason for amending this very wholesale criticism.

Something of the earlier St James's Street can be evoked from the pencil of Hogarth and the caricaturists of the eighteenth century, etc.,[1] although in the famous plate in *The Rake's Progress* the architectural detail is so subsidiary to the story related that we can merely see in that picture the straight, rather formal but wholly dignified Georgian houses which were common to so many London thoroughfares of the period. Indeed, with a few exceptions, it is the human element that makes for the fascination of St James's Street, and about that aspect of it I shall have something to say in another chapter. Architecturally its day is to come. There is ample evidence that it is dawning even now, and it will not apparently be long before, on either side, those splendid stone-fronted buildings, of which a few are already in existence, will be the rule, not, as now, the exception. When this reconstruction is complete it will be still more difficult to recall to mind those less ambitious but hardly less picturesque red-brick structures of which so few have survived.

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[1] I may mention *A Sequel to the Battle of Temple Bar, The British Patriots' Procession through London,* and *The Funeral Procession of the Duke of York,* inter alia, a reproduction of the first being given in this volume.

III

THE TRIBUTARY STREETS

EAST SIDE

In this chapter I want to speak of those streets and courts which still run into St James's Street, or which once did so. Most of them are both of the past and the present; a few have, however, disappeared. Before describing these I must point out that I have thought it best to deal in quite a general way with Jermyn Street: it has a history of its own, so to speak: its length carries it into a region which, if fully dealt with, would make it necessary equally to deal with an equivalent area on other sides of St James's Street, with the result that, instead of writing the history of this particular thoroughfare, I should, if I trespassed so far outside its boundaries, be relating the history of a large portion of the West End. With regard to King Street, the other important tributary, the case is different, as it extends but a relatively short way, and St James's Square forms its natural limit.

One of the earliest detailed plans showing St James's Street is the map of St James's Parish, published by William Rhodes in 1770. By this we find, on the east side, the following streets and courts marked: Pickering Place, Gloucester Court, King Street, Little Rider Street, Fox Court,[1] Crown and Sceptre Court, Little Jermyn Street and Villiers Court. I will take this side first before referring to the outlets on the opposite side of the way.

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[1] In 1698 three people were living here—viz. John Bennett, Thomas Ealy and John Hurst.

PICKERING COURT

This court is now known as Pickering Place, and runs up by the side of No. 4 St James's Street. It was originally called Strode's, or Stroud's,[1] Court, no doubt taking its name from a former ground landlord who lived close by in St James's Street. When it first assumed its present name is not clear. In Dodsley's *London*, 1761, it is referred to as Pickering Court; while in a *Directory* for 1758 it is given, indifferently, both as Pickering Court and *Streuds* (*sic*) Court. It is, therefore, probable that it was about this time that its name was altered. William Pickering, a prosperous merchant, is known to have established himself at No. 4 St James's Street in 1740, and to have gradually acquired most of the adjoining property. When Rocque issued his plan of London a few years later he called the place Pickering's Court; and in the Rate Books for 1785 it is so given; four people were then living in it—viz. Lord Kirkcudbright, Matthew Hallagan, Josiah Winnock and James Parsloe.

There is extant a card-plate of the Georgian period on which is engraved the following:—"5 Pickering Place, St James's Street, Rouge and Roulette, French and English Hazard. Commence at one o'clock." No name appears on the plate, for rather obvious reasons, this house at the bottom of the court facing St James's Street, and still in existence, being then one of the most notorious gambling hells in London. Its fashionable position, no less than its sequestered situation (you may, to-day, easily pass its entrance court without observing it), made it peculiarly fitted for its purpose. How long its career of this character lasted, it is difficult to say; but it is probable that the place existed as a

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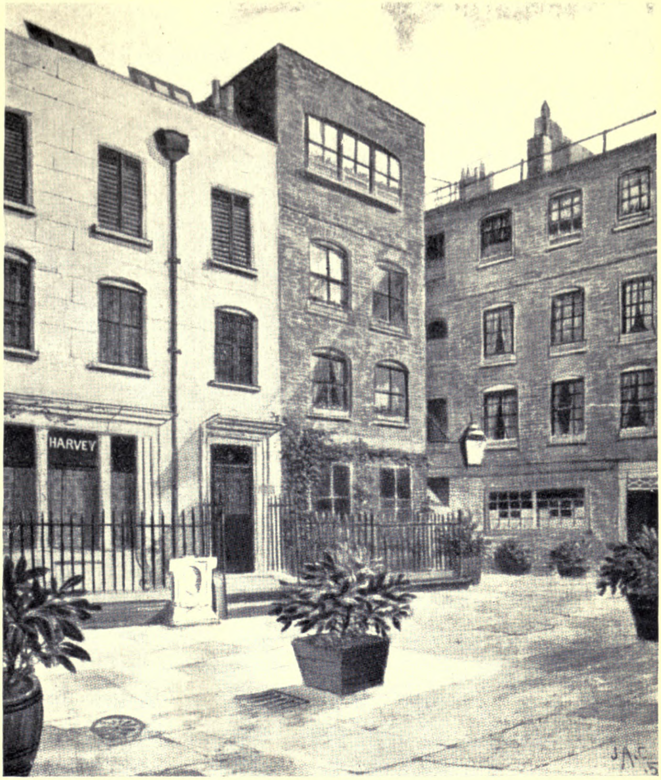
[1] It is so given in the Rate Books for 1695, etc. Maitland, in 1739, also gives it thus.



PICKERING PLACE, AS IT IS TO-DAY

gambling centre down to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

To-day the "Place" has a quiet and retired air—there is something almost cloistral about it—its little flagged courtyard being reached by a passage, the sides of which are half-timbered and are, no doubt, a relic of the earliest buildings of St James's Street. It alone shares with the neighbouring Palace something of the antiquity which has no other survivals in this neighbourhood.

GLOUCESTER COURT

Gloucester Court no longer exists, but it was formerly situated nine houses from the bottom of St James's Street, in which position Elmes, in his *Topographical Dictionary of London* (1831), gives it. Maitland, in 1739, does not mention it, but as it is marked in Rhodes's plan (1770) we can trace its formation approximately. It was probably swept out of existence when the St James's Bazaar was built, as that building was next to No. 9 St James's Street. This Bazaar was erected by Crockford, from the design of G. Bond,[1] in 1832. I may mention here that, according to Timbs, this building (still in existence, but internally reconstructed) had a saloon 200 feet long, and that here were exhibited, in 1841, three dioramic tableaux of the second funeral of Napoleon, to which we may be sure Thackeray[2] was a visitor; and that in 1844 the first exhibition of the decorative works for the new Houses of Parliament were here shown.

At a subsequent period the building was converted into chambers, and between 1883 and 1884 it underwent another transformation, the Junior Army and Navy Club having acquired it. Under Wyatt Papworth, the architect, the interior was wholly reconstructed and made suitable for its new purpose.

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[1] The designs were continued by Sir J. Pennethorne.

[2] Who wrote *The Second Funeral of Napoleon*, it will be remembered.

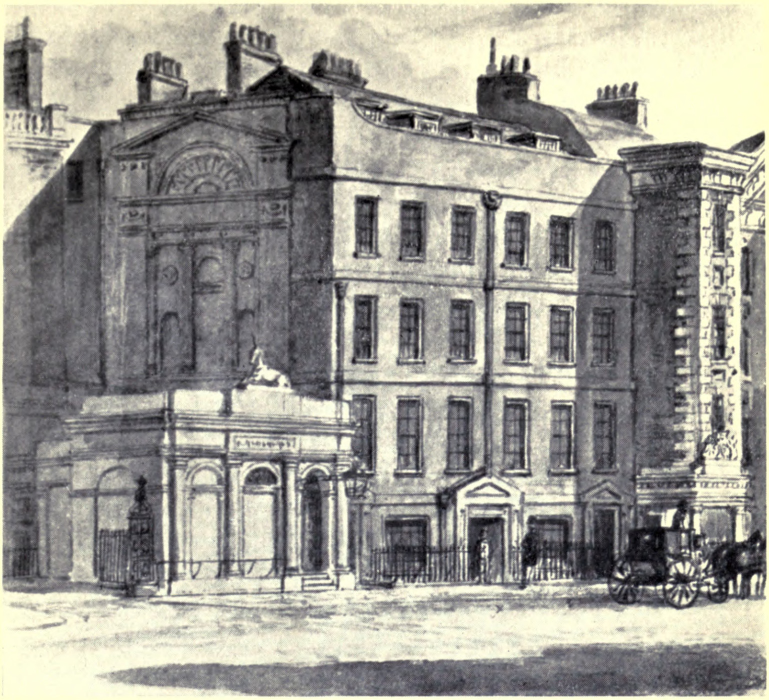
It is within recent years that the club gave up its home here and that the premises were acquired by Rumpelmeyer, whose tea-rooms (now moved to the opposite side of St James's Street) were a fashionable lounge. Since his removal the place was occupied as a carriage-builder's, and at the time of writing is again undergoing alteration for a like purpose. As the building occupies a far longer frontage to King Street than it does to St James's Street, and has its principal entrance there, it properly takes its place in the account of the former, rather than in that of the latter, thoroughfare.

It seems probable that Gloucester Court was so named after the Duke of Gloucester, the brother of George III., although the fact cannot be substantiated.

KING STREET

King Street, apart from its being one of the more important turnings out of St James's Street, is notable as containing the site of the famous Almack's, as well as the one-time residence of Napoleon III., and as, to-day, being identified with the world-known establishment of "Christie's."

King Street was made in 1673, and was one of the thoroughfares which formed part of the development of St James's Square, by Lord St Albans. At its north-east corner stood Halifax House, whose occupier, George Savile, Lord Halifax, the celebrated Trimmer, is entered in the Rate Books as of "King's Street in St James's Fields." His connection with this neighbourhood, however, is more properly associated with the Square itself, on which his residence abutted, just as is that of the



JAMES CHRISTIES' AUCTION ROOM AS IT APPEARED IN 1803
From a drawing by T. H. Shepherd

Duke of Cleveland, who occupied the house opposite (with an entrance in King Street), at the south-west corner of the Square, in 1726.

In its earlier form King Street had no carriage communication with St James's Street, a narrow court connecting the two, till 1830, when the roadway was made a uniform width, as it is at present. This change may be traced, I imagine, to the erection of the St James's Bazaar, which rose some two years later, and which was responsible for the pulling down of the small houses at the south-west corner of the court.

Besides containing this large building, as well as Messrs Christie's [1] at No. 8, which, by the by, stands on the site of what was formerly Wilson's European Emporium or Museum, that place in turn following a gambling hell of unenviable notoriety, and Willis's Rooms (originally Almack's) opposite, King Street has in it the St James's Theatre, which was erected, in 1835, from the designs of Samuel Beazley for Braham, the singer, whose fame has been perpetuated in the inimitable prose of Lamb.

Under his ægis, however, the place was not an unqualified success, and Kenney once told Alfred Bunn that, hearing Braham express himself satisfied with the number in the pit on a certain occasion, he took the trouble to count them, and found the audience in that part of the house numbered exactly seventeen! At a later date the great Rachel electrified London at the St James's and here scored some of her most notable triumphs. Much later still, Ravel and Schneider played here to crowded houses, and in our own days the theatre has been largely associated with the successes identified with the names of the Kendals, Sir John Hare and Sir George Alexander. In 1879 the interior was completely remodelled, and from that date to 1888 Hare and the Kendals occupied it.

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[1] Messrs Christie's have been in King Street since 1823, moving hence from Pall Mall in that year. The history of the great house's foundation does not, therefore, properly belong to these pages, nor is it necessary to set down the long list of famous sales, from that of the Bernal collection in 1855, and the Hamilton Palace dispersal in 1882 downwards, because a splendid record of the initiation and gradual development of the firm, and an exhaustive list of its sales, with some of the special lots disposed of, and the prices they fetched, has been compiled by Mr W. Roberts in his *Memorials of Christie's*, 2 vols., 1879; wherein may be read so much of the romance of that famous sale-room and not a little of the vanity of human wishes.

At one time the street boasted an hotel—to wit, Nerot's, at No. 19—and I find it specifically mentioned in the year 1782; but it cannot claim to have a history except for the fact that Nelson on his return to London, after the battle of the Nile, stayed here for a short time, his wife and father having come here previously to receive him.

Of distinguished residents King Street has had its share. Here, in 1712, Theresa Blount was lodging "next door to my Lord Salisbury's," as Pope addresses her in that year. The Lord Salisbury referred to must have been the 5th Earl, who succeeded to the title in 1694, and died in 1728. Another one-time resident was Sir John Pringle, a President of the Royal Society, who died "at his apartments in King Street, St James's Square," in January 1782. It is Pringle, it will be remembered, whom Boswell describes as "my own friend and my Father's friend," but whom Johnson could not away with. On the famous journey to Auchinleck, Boswell was at infinite pains to induce Johnson to avoid three subjects of discussion with his father, Sir John Pringle being one. A lady as much forgotten to-day as the worthy President (who, indeed, has a sort of fame in being frequently referred to in the great biography) was Charlotte Smith, who was born in King Street on 4th May 1749. She has been described as a once celebrated novelist and sonneteer, but her fame is distinctly of yesterday. She died in 1806, and all that is remembered (if they be remembered) of her literary activity are her two later works, *The Old English Manor House* and *Emmeline.*

In view of the many beautiful things which have changed hands at Christie's, it is interesting to find that when, in 1783, Sir William Hamilton purchased the famous Barberini vase, he took lodgings in King Street. Miss Hamilton writes in her diary, under date of 31st December 1783: "We went to my uncle Sir W. H., at the Hotel [? Nerot's] in King Street, St James's; ye Dss [of Portland] was already there; saw ye fine Vase."[1]

At an earlier date, Swift speaks of Lady Worsley (a beauty of the period, wife of Sir Robert Worsley and daughter of Lord Weymouth) lodging "in the very house in King St. where D. D.'s mother bought the sweetbread when I lodged there, and M. D. came to see me."[2]

King Street possesses one mural tablet. It is on the small house, No. 3A, at the St James's Square end of the street. Here Louis Napoleon lodged; hence he set out for his descent on Boulogne; and this house he pointed out to his Empress, as they were driving down St James's Street in triumph on the occasion of their State visit to Queen Victoria. The "Man of Destiny" must have had strange thoughts as he compared his humble style of life as an adventurer whom few took seriously, with his apotheosis as Emperor of a great people. Even his inscrutable eyes must have lighted up for a moment at the revenges which Time had brought him.

He lived in King Street for two years, 1838-1840, having, when he came here, been but recently expelled from Switzerland. While here he was enrolled as a special constable during the Chartist riots, and he also took part, in August 1839, in the famous rain-spoilt Eglinton Tournament.

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[1] Mrs Delany's *Autobiography*, vol. vi., p. 192.

[2] *Journal to Stella.* D. D. was Mrs Dingley; M. D., Stella herself. When Swift speaks of lodging here, he evidently means in Bury Street, where he had rooms.

Bishop Wilberforce, in his diary, describes the future Emperor as he was at this time, and particularly mentions his mean-looking appearance; he was small, "with a tendency to *embonpoint*, and had a remarkable way of, as it were, swimming up a room, with an uncertain gait; a small grey eye, looking cunning, but with an aspect of softness in it too."

Notwithstanding many disabilities, however, and the fact that he was a proscribed person, he, to use Archibald Forbes's words, "at once made good his footing in the best circles of the British capital, and he became immediately a personage of high social interest and importance." He led the life of a man of fashion and was a *persona grata* at Gore House; but the more serious side of his character was evinced by the publication, in 1839, of those *Idées Napoléoniennes*, which have been described as "the brightest and fullest expression" of his mind.

Although the house in King Street was his chief *pied-à-terre* at this period, he seems, on his first arrival in London, to have put up at Fenton's Hotel in St James's Street, and to have spent some time both at Lord Cardigan's house in Carlton House Terrace and Lord Ripon's in Carlton Gardens.

Nearly opposite Napoleon III.'s old house is the quaint, picturesque little building (No. 29) now occupied by the Orleans Club, which was formed in 1877, and largely identified with the sporting name of Sir John Astley—the Mate—who so greatly interested himself in the club when it had its suburban headquarters at Orleans House, Twickenham.

BURY STREET

On the north side of King Street are two thoroughfares, Bury and Duke Streets. The former (where Brummell's grandfather let lodgings, by the by) would be more properly written Berry, for it was named after a Mr Berry,[1] the ground-landlord of most of the houses in it, and was formed in 1672. It is chiefly notable as having once contained a house in which Steele lived from 1707 to 1710, and another where Swift lodged at various times. Frequent references to the former, which was next door to the residence of Lady Berkeley, are to be found in Steele's letters. One to his wife, before their marriage, contains the following:—"I believe it would not be amiss if some time this afternoon you took a coach or chair and went to see a house next door to Lady Berkeley's towards St James's Street, which is to let." On other occasions he mentions the position of the house with great particularity, as thus: "Mrs Steele. At her house 3rd door from Germain Street, left hand in Berry Street"; and again, "Mrs Steele. At her house the last house but two on the left hand, Berry Street, St James's." Mrs Vanderput was the Steeles' landlady here. We know that once she had Dick arrested for arrears of rent, in November 1708, which no doubt was the reason for his referring to her (as he does in a letter to his wife) as "that insufferable brute."

Two years later Steele again came to lodge here, so I suppose either that he had made it up with Mrs Vanderput or that another landlady ruled in her place. It is interesting in connection with this second sojourn to find the following passage in a letter (dated 28th July 1710) from Dennis the critic to Steele[2]:—"I should only, perhaps, have advised you, in order to the preventing some troublesome visits, and some impertinent letters, to cause an advertisement to be inserted in Squire Bickerstaff's next *Lucubrations*, by which the world might be informed that the Captain Steele who lives now in Bury Street is not the Captain of the same name who lived there two years ago, and that the acquaintance of the military person who inhabited there formerly, may go look for their old friend, e'en where they can find him." From what we know of Dick Steele's history, the advice is suggestive.

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[1] He died in 1735, and was then over one hundred years of age

[2] Given in *London Past and Present.*

Steele's one-time residence, described by Cunningham as "over against No. 20," was demolished in 1830. Swift first came to lodge in Bury Street in September 1710. He refers to it in a letter to Stella, thus: "I lodge in Berry Street, where I removed a week ago. I have the first floor, a dining-room, and a bed-chamber, at eight shillings a week; playing deep, but I spend nothing for eating, never go to a tavern, and very seldom in a coach; yet, after all, it will be expensive."[1] It was not altogether satisfactory apparently, for on 8th November he writes: "Impudence, if you vex me; I will give ten shillings a week for my lodgings, for I am almost st——k out of this with the sink, and it helps me to verses in my 'shower.'"[2] And again in December he moans: "What is this? faith, I smell fire; what can it be? this house has a thousand stinks in it. I think to leave it on Thursday, and lodge over the way." Apparently he did not go to a house opposite, for although he bespoke it the landlord let it to someone else. "I gave him no earnest, so it seems he could do it," writes Swift.

The result was that he had to find apartments elsewhere, and settled on some in St Albans Street, a thoroughfare removed in 1815 to make way for Waterloo Place. At a later period, however, Swift returned to Bury Street, for on his last visit to England in 1726 we find him lodging there, "next to the 'Royal Chair.'" Five doors away Mrs Vanhomrigh and her daughter Vanessa lived, and it was in their Bury Street lodgings that the latter, as she told the Dean, saw "something in your looks so awful that it strikes me dumb."

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[1] *Journal to Stella*, 29th September 1710.

[2] "Returning home at night, you'll find the sink
Strike your offended sense with double stink."
Description of a City Shower.

By the side of such great figures as those of Steele and Swift we find others who give the street a distinctly literary air. For instance, Tom Moore was here on various occasions: in 1805, at No. 27 (numbered later 28), whence he dedicated his *Odes and Epistles* to Lord Moira; and, again, in 1810, where the advertisement to the fourth number of his *Irish Melodies* was dated and whither he brought his young wife in the following year; in 1814 he was at No. 33; ten years later at No. 24; and in 1830 at No. 19. He seems to have been at the last house before, as writing to Power, he remarks: "I would not go to him [the landlord] but for my hatred of strange places and faces."

With reference to the first-named house we have the following interesting note in Moore's diary for 19th February 1828:—

"Went with Keppel to his lodgings, 28 Bury Street (formerly 27), for the purpose of seeing the rooms where he lives (second floor) which were my abode off and on for ten or twelve years. The sight brought back old times; it was there I wrote my *Odes and Epistles from America*, and in the parlour Strangford wrote most of his *Camoens*. In that second floor I had an illness of eight weeks, of which I was near dying, and in that shabby little second floor, when I was slowly recovering, the beautiful Duchess of St Albans (Miss Mellon) to my surprise one day paid me a visit."

The Keppel spoken of was Major Keppel, a son of Lord Albemarle. A new building has long replaced the house where Moore carolled and Lord Strangford made known to English readers the beauties of the unfortunate Camoens.

Another poet who once lodged here was Crabbe who, writing in his journal for 28th June 1817, notes seeking lodgings at No. 37 Bury Street on that day. Only females were visible and he found his new abode "a little mysterious," and was at a loss to know "whether my damsel is extremely simple, or too knowing." The house in which he occupied rooms was, at a later date, turned into an hotel, in which capacity it was existing in 1885.[1]

It was here, by the by, that the Hon. W. Spencer, about whom Lamb has that good story, and who wrote *Beth Gelert* and translated *Lenore*, lived for a time in 1813.

Another of Moore's lodgings was once occupied by a notable man, Daniel O'Connell staying at No. 19, what time the struggle for Catholic Emancipation was being fought out in 1829. I had almost written that G. F. Cooke, the actor, who was living in Bury Street in 1802, was the last famous inhabitant to be noticed, when I remembered that a still more notable person, and one whose memory will last as long as any of those mentioned, once resided here. I mean the immortal Major Pendennis.[2]

DUKE STREET

Duke Street has an interest apart from the notable people with whom it is associated, for it was the first thoroughfare in London in which pavements were laid.[1] The list of its better-known inhabitants is headed by that Sir Carr Scroope whom Rochester lashes in his poems, and who was living here at the north end of the east side of the street from 1679 to 1683.[2] He must have been one of the earliest residents, as the thoroughfare was probably formed not earlier than 1672. Just a hundred years after Scroope's departure we find Mrs Bellamy, the actress, writing to Dr Johnson from No. 10, asking for his patronage to one of her benefits, as she was then "reduced to distress" through "a long chancery suit and a complicated train of unfortunate events."[3]

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[1] Hutton's *Literary Landmarks of London.*

[2] We must not forget that Soame Jenyns died in Bury Street, in 1787, and that it was here, on one occasion, that Horace Walpole stood in the snow, with only slippers on, to watch a fire at five o'clock in the morning. He had come across from Arlington Street for that purpose.

But a greater than Mrs Bellamy once gave distinction to Duke Street, for here Edmund Burke was lodging at No. 67, in 1790, and hence he dates letters to Sir Philip Francis. The Duke Street rooms were the last Burke occupied in London.

There seems to be some doubt about the exact date of his residence here. In *London Past and Present*, which I have followed, the year is given as above, and the letters substantiate it. In Mr Wheatley's *Round About Piccadilly*, however, Burke is stated to have lodged at No. 6 in 1793, and at No. 25 in the following year; while *Old and New London* gives the date of his residence as 1795.

At an earlier period Sugden, the future Lord Chancellor of Ireland and England, was born in the house of his father, a barber, in Duke Street, on 12th February 1781. As Lord St Leonards he died so late as 1875, and his will was, it may be remembered, the subject of much litigation.

Just as in the case of Bury Street, so in that of Duke Street, a literary flavour is discernible—Campbell,

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[1] A like claim has been made for York Street leading from St James's Square to Jermyn Street. It is probable that both streets were thus paved about the same time, as experiments.

[2] *London Past and Present.*

[3] Boswell's *Johnson.*

Moore, and Marryat all having lived here. Campbell's lodgings were (in 1832) at No. 10, subsequently known as Sussex Chambers. At the time of the poet's residence here the house, in which he occupied an upper room, was the headquarters of the Polish Association, presided over by Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart. Here Campbell led a life that just suited him. "I am not," he writes, "dissatisfied with my existence as it is now occupied." He breakfasted at nine and then went to his club till twelve. "Then I sit down," he adds, "to my own studies and, with many and also vexatious interruptions, do what I can till four. I then walk round the Park, and generally dine at six. Between nine and ten I return to chambers, read a book or write a letter, and go to bed before twelve."

The house in which he lived, at a later date became the home of the Catholic Union of Great Britain. It was a fine mansion, with a notable staircase, ornamental ceilings and mahogany doors. Below were spacious vaults, which tradition carried on, by passage-way, under Pall Mall and the Park, to the Houses of Parliament. Tradition often did as much as engineering in a credulous age. Another story was that the house had once been occupied by that much-housed potentate, Oliver Cromwell.

Two doors away (at No. 8) Captain Marryat was lodging from 1837 to 1839. The house still preserves much of the outward appearance it bore in the novelist's time, and its substantial, uncompromising front is redolent of the domestic town architecture of a century ago. Marryat was a Londoner born, but it has been rightly said of him that "no better painter of English sailor-life has sought the favour of the reading world since Smollett gave us Trunnion and Pipes." Although some of the better-remembered productions of his fertile pen appeared before he came to live in Duke Street, to his residence there may be traced *Masterman Ready* and *Percival Keene*, *Joseph*

Rushbrooke and *The Phantom Ship*, while *Snarley-yow* was published in the year he took up his residence here.

The ubiquitous Tom Moore is traced as lodging at No. 15 Duke Street in 1833. From his diary I find that the poet arrived here on the 6th of March and appears to have stayed till the 24th of May, when he left for Buckhill. While here he frequented Brooks's, visited such old friends as Lord Lansdowne and Rogers, and had his boy out from the Charterhouse on various occasions, duly noted in his journal.

Among other past residents in Duke Street was William Jerrold, the naturalist, whose father was a newsvendor in the thoroughfare. The son was faithful to the spot, for he is recorded as dying, in 1861, in a house at the Duke Street corner of Ryder Street. It was, no doubt, while there that he was occupied with the preparation of those great works on birds and fishes with which his name is identified and which appeared during the years 1835-1843.

As in the case of Bury Street, so here I make an end of the list with an immortal—namely, that "innocent piece of dinner furniture that went upon easy castors, and was kept over a livery stable-yard in Duke Street, St James's," and whose name, as readers of *Our Mutual Friend* will not need reminding, was Twemlow. Here he underwent fearful doubts and misgivings as to whether or not he was really the oldest friend of those unspeakable Veneerings.[1]

RYDER STREET AND FOX COURT

In early days the western end of this thoroughfare—that is, between Bury and St James's Streets—was known as Little Rider Street, and it is so given in Rhodes's plan of the parish, dated 1770. It was formed in 1674, and received its name from that of a Captain Ryder, who had, in 1660, set up gates on the Parish Lammas Lands.[1]

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[1] I find that in 1748 a Colonel Russell, of the Coldstreams, was living in Duke Street (R. Hist. MSS. Commission).

In 1693 Thomas Dangan, brother of the Earl of Limerick, is given as residing "at his lodgings in Rider Street, near St James's." Not long after Swift was in rooms (apparently in 1712) which he describes as "over against the house in Little Ryder Street," where Mrs Dingley also lived.

One of the Dean's letters, dated from Letcombe, near Wantage, in 1714, is addressed to "Mrs Esther Vanhomrigh, at her lodgings over against the Surgeon's in Great Ryder Street, near St James's."

There must have been happy memories for this turbulent spirit in the Ryder Street abode, either of himself or Vanessa, for, at a later date (1722), when trying to raise his fair friend's spirits, he remarks, "remember . . . Rider Street."[2]

As this is the sum total of Ryder Street's history, it will be seen that it compares unfavourably in this respect with the neighbouring thoroughfares.

Fox Court was a tiny *cul-de-sac*, slightly north of Ryder Street and divided from it by four houses, Nos. 26-29 St James's Street, as shown in Horwood's plan. J. T. Smith mentions a certain Norman, a dog doctor, as having a house in this passage, and here lodged John Keyse Sherwin, in whose studio Smith served his apprenticeship. Miss Hawkins, in her entertaining *Memoirs*, complains that Sherwin was in the habit of firing pistols out of his window half the night, and she adds: "He half-drowned his pupils, for, sad to say, he had pupils in *punch*." Smith, who ought to have known, controverts this statement and takes occasion in doing so to say that he certainly was not a pupil in this sense. With regard to Norman, Smith records an amusing dialogue between Mrs Norman and Mrs Nollekens, on the subject of one of the latter's dogs. It was in Sherwin's studio that Smith met the beautiful Mrs Robinson—the Perdita of George Prince of Wales's Florizel—and in his *Book for a Rainy Day* he tells how, as a young man, he received a kiss from her here. Here, too, he once saw Mrs Siddons sit "in an attitude of the highest dignity, in the character of the Grecian Daughter."[1]

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[1] Rate Books.

[2] *London Past and Present*. There is one club—The Eccentric—housed in Ryder Street.

JERMYN STREET

Jermyn Street took form rather earlier than did the other tributary thoroughfares on the east side of St James's Street, having been laid out about the year 1667. It was so named from Henry Jermyn, Earl of St Albans, who developed the surrounding property in the early years of Charles II.'s reign. In common with Charles Street, King Street, and St Albans Street (now Waterloo Place), it was one of the first thoroughfares completed north of Pall Mall, as a part of this building scheme. The portion between St James's Church and St James's Street was originally known as Little Jermyn Street, the rest of it as Great Jermyn Street.

One of the earliest residents was Sir William Stanley, who in the year of the street's formation is rated at one pound (which he did not pay, by the by), as being in "Jarman Street, West End, North Side." This spelling of the name reminds me that its orthography always seems to have been a difficult matter. The ways (in spelling) of the old rate-collectors were proverbially weird and wonderful, so that in the Rate Books one naturally expects to find variants of all kinds, but even Shadwell, in his *Virtuoso*, published in 1676, sets it down as Germin, and Lord Arran calls it Jermain Street in 1681, while Sir John Banks addresses a letter to Jerman Street in 1690, and another correspondent, two years later, writes it German Street.[1]

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[1] See also his *Nollekens and His Times*, where, by the by, he mentions a certain Vevini, a figure maker, who was living in St James's Street, as producing "a fine mould of the Laocoon." When Smith wrote his book (1828), Vevini was in his eighty-ninth year, and was then styled the "Father of the Painters." He had been a pupil of Francis Hayman.

Another early resident was Colonel Churchill (afterwards the great Duke of Marlborough), who occupied, from 1675 to 1681 a house at the west end, south side, about five doors down the thoroughfare. Lord Arran, writing to the Duke of Ormond on 28th January 1682, says: "I have this day removed to Col. Churchill's house in Jermain Street." Lady Arran was expecting the birth of a child, and her husband seems to have arranged for this residence with a view to that event.[2] About the same time the Duchess of Richmond (La Belle Stuart of De Grammont's *Memoirs*) was living on the north side of the Street (1681-1683), where she was succeeded in the tenancy (in 1684) by the Countess of Northumberland. Next door to this house Henry Saville, the friend of Lord Rochester, was residing for a period exactly equalling that of the Duchess of Richmond. Three doors off was Simon Verelst, the painter, of whose vanity Walpole has left us several anecdotes. To this house Sir William Soames came to live in 1684. Sir William hangs on to the skirts of fame as having once produced a poem on the *Art of Poetry*, which was revised by no less a person than Dryden.

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[1] In the autobiography of Dr George Clarke, among the Leybourne-Popham MSS., I find the following reference to the street:—

"I was put to school at one Mr Gordon, a Scotsman who lived in what is since called Jermyn Street."

Clarke was born in 1661, and stayed at Gordon's school till somewhat over ten years of age.

[2] Hist. MSS. Commission.

Another fashionable resident was the Earl of Westmorland, who is found writing to the Duke of Albemarle, on 28th November 1681, from Jermyn Street. Some years later Sir George Rooke dates a letter (25th May 1695) to Lord Shrewsbury from here, and in 1692 an anonymous correspondent of Sir Joseph Williamson directs the letter to "his house in German Street," as does Sir John Banks two years earlier, although he spells it differently, thus: "Jerman Streete." Williamson was still in the street in 1696, as letters to him there testify, and in this year one George Stokefield writes to Madame Higgins "at Mr Greenvill's in Jermyn Street, at the Two Blue Pyramids," an unusual sign which has eluded the vigilance of Larwood and Hatton.

A year later Sir Isaac Newton was living in a house near St James's Church, and remained there till 1709. He appears, however, to have lodged in the street at an earlier date, for a letter written by Flamsteed and dated 2nd January 1689, is addressed to "Mr Izaak Newton, at his house in German Street, near St James's." Two years after Newton had left, Lady Grendison came to live in Jermyn Street, and the letter (from Miss E. Pitt to her sister, the Hon. Mrs Pitt) giving this information tells us of the presence here of another fashionable lady. "The house," she writes, "that is taken for my Lady Grendison is in Jermyn Street amost opeset to Lady Barrymore's. I would have gone to see it but have had no coacth to go anywhere."[1]

A better-remembered resident was, however, Mr Secretary Craggs, who died here in 1720, so suddenly and mysteriously, on the very day when the report incriminating him with complicity in the South Sea Bubble, was read in the House of Commons. Pope's eulogistic and friendly epitaph in Westminster Abbey can hardly be regarded as impartially stating the case for Craggs.

[1] Fortescue MSS.

A still more famous contemporary, in the person of Bishop Berkeley, was lodging here in 1725, as we find from the fact that he desires his correspondent to address him at "Mr Bindon's, at the Golden Globe in Jermyn's Street, near Piccadilly." Another resident (in 1737) was the Dowager Duchess of Portland, who died at her house here.[1]

Lord Carteret was staying in Jermyn Street in June 1734, as is proved by a letter he wrote at this time to the Earl of March; and just as he represents the political world in the street, so the poets Gray and Shenstone give it a poetical flavour. Gray was here in lodgings at the end of 1753. On the 5th November of that year he writes to Mason, asking him to look out for a lodging in Jermyn Street, but that he won't give "more than half a guinea a week for it, nor put up with a second floor, unless it has a tolerable room to the street." The apartments were found at Robert's the hosier, or Frisby's the oilman, in Jermyn Street, both of which were situated at the east end of the street, though on different sides of the way. Gray used generally to take his dinner alone, it being sent in to his lodgings from a neighbouring eating-house.

Shenstone, when he could tear himself away from his beloved "Leasowes," used, in London, to occupy lodgings here; and here Dr Hunter began the formation of his remarkable museum, which was eventually housed in Windmill Street. His "residence here" extended from 1750 to 1768, and on his leaving the Jermyn Street house his brother, John Hunter, came to live in it till 1783, when he removed to Leicester Square.

Besides those I have mentioned other great and notable people are identified with Jermyn Street: the Hon. Charles Townshend writes to Lord Townshend from here in 1748; Sir George Baker addresses letters hence in

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[1] Mrs Delany's *Autobiography*, vol. i., p. 597.

1764-1765; Sir George Rooke writes to Mr Burchett in 1705 from Jermyn Street; the elder Pitt was here in 1762, having removed in that year from St James's Square, and here had the meeting with Bute concerning a coalition ministry to succeed the Grenville administration; here Sydney Smith lodged at No. 81 in 1811, and Tom Moore at No. 58 in 1825. Sir Thomas Lawrence lodged at No. 42 in 1790, at which house he was succeeded by Sir Martin Shee, who lived here till 1796. Lesser names are those of Sir John Irvine, who is found dating letters from Jermyn Street in 1777 and 1780; Richardson Pack, who writes to Matthew Prior from here in 1719; Lord Kensington in 1781, and Governor Hamilton in the same year. In 1820 E. H. Locker asks permission, in a letter bearing the Jermyn Street address, of Lord Dartmouth to publish certain letters of George III.'s; and here, in 1832, Mr Gladstone, on his first entering Parliament, took rooms over the shop of a corn chandler named Crampern (a relative of one of his Newark constituents), a few doors west from York Street, as he once told Mr Dasent.[1]

In a list of "Persons who Paid Tax on Male Servants in 1780" the names of Sir George Baker and the Hon. Mrs Cooper appear as residents in Jermyn Street.

Jermyn Street has always been a street of hotels, not of those vast caravanserai which have sprung up in other parts of London, but of those smaller "family" resting-places which seem to be redolent of the earlier years of last century. There was, for instance, the Gun Tavern, kept by Rouelle (afterwards an active member of the French National Assembly), a great haunt of foreigners, whose patronage it shared with Grenier's Hotel[2] close by.

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[1] See *History of St James's Square.*

[2] Lord Auckland writing to Lord Grenville, on 7th July 1793, mentions a Mr Crawford "who lodges at Conest's Hotel, in Jermyn Street."

Of Grenier's Mr Storey, writing to Lord Auckland, on 24th September 1789, remarks: "Saintefoy has been out of town for these few days, but I believe he is shortly to return to Grenier's Hotel, in Jermyn Street, the grand resort of the illustrious fugitives from France, where, amongst others, is Madame de Boufflers and the Countess Emilie." One likes to think that it was from here that Madame de Boufflers set out on her famous visit to Dr Johnson in the Temple. There are plenty of hotels in Jermyn Street to-day,[1] but the place of one is now a Turkish Baths and the Hammam Chambers, and this one was the most famous of them all, for here, in July 1832, Scott came on his return from the Continent a dying man, and here he lay, half dreaming and half dead, for three weeks before being carried, on his last sad journey, to his own home beside the rippling Tweed.

The Museum of Practical Geology, whose other front looks so strange in shop-lined Piccadilly, is in this street, and is, indeed, sometimes known as "The Jermyn Street Museum"; and also here is St James's Church, or, rather, that part of it that cannot be said to be in Piccadilly.

Erected by Lord St Albans in 1680 it owes much to the combined genius of Wren and Grinling Gibbons. Its organ once belonged to James II.; three of its rectors have become Archbishops of Canterbury: Tenison, Wake, and Secker. Here the Princess Anne used to attend divine service when living at Berkeley House, and Defoe, who was scandalised at the charges made for a seat, "where it costs one almost as dear as to see a play," according to Mackay who, however, remarks on the "fine assembly of beauties and quality " that came there, including my Lord Foppington. The churchyard (where Gibbon once stumbled and sprained his foot) as well as the church is full of illustrious dead. Cotton, the friend and collaborator of Izaak Walton, lies here, and Tom D'Urfey, whose 'pills to purge melancholy' formed a prescription that many partook of; Van der Velde, the royal marine painter, and Dahl and Hayman, once fashionable portrait painters, and Harlowe, famous for his historical scenes. Mrs Delany, who lived and died in St James's Place, is buried here, and Akenside, who expired in Old Burlington Street; Dodsley was carried hither from 51 Pall Mall, and Gillray from 29 St James's Street; while that awful "Old Q" rests within the sound of the Piccadilly of which he was once the most notorious resident. At the beautiful font, which the art of Gibbons adorned, the great Chatham and the exquisite Chesterfield had been held.

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[1] A quarter of a century ago there were Rawlings' at Nos. 37-38; The Brunswick at Nos. 52-53; Cox's at No. 55; the Cavendish at No. 81; the British at Nos. 82-83; the Waterloo at Nos. 85-86; some of which survive. Jules is here, too, and the ubiquitous Lyons!

As one takes leave of Jermyn Street, with its pleasant trees shading the churchyard, one remembers the curious story (told by Dr William King and retold by Mr Whitten)[1] of the eccentric Mr Horne, who, one day in the year 1706, disappeared from his wife and family here and remained securely hidden no farther off than Westminster for seventeen years; after which he returned and apparently lived happily ever after. The story only proves what anyone (not wanted by the police) knows—viz. that London is the easiest place in the world to hide oneself in, but it seems also to indicate a kink in Mr Horne.

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[1] *Anecdotes of his Own Time* and *A Londoner's London.*

IV

THE TRIBUTARY STREETS

WEST SIDE

BENNET STREET

THE first turning we come to in descending St James's Street on the west side is Bennet Street. It takes its name from Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, one of the Cabal ministry, who owned the ground on which it was formed in 1679. It is a small street and serves chiefly as a means of communication between St James's Street and Arlington Street. Yet it has its memories, for Byron, "Leonidas" Glover, and Zoffany, the painter, have all lived in it.[1]

Zoffany was here (on his return from India) from 1795 to 1796, and by the Rate Books I find he paid forty pounds rent. The house was empty during the quarter from Christmas to Lady Day, after which the painter apparently gave it up. He probably took it on a yearly tenancy.

When exactly Glover was living in Bennet Street I cannot trace. He doubtless occupied lodgings, so the Rate Books are no guide. His residence is said to have been at No. 9, at the north-west corner of St James's Street, where Messrs Hoopers' premises are now. As he died in Albemarle Street in 1785 it is probable that he went there from his Bennet Street lodging. Glover is so absolutely the man of one book that the title of it is invariably appended to his name—*Leonidas Glover*—although he produced other poems, such as his *London*, in 1739; his *Boadicea*, in 1753; and a stupendous *Athenaid* in thirty books, brought out posthumously, in 1787, by his daughter.

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[1] In 1722 a Mr Wild was living there, and on 19th October of that year a letter was addressed "to Mr Flord at Mr Wild's in Bennet Street." It was one of the communications of Jacobites concerned in Layer's conspiracy.

Byron's residence in Bennet Street was of an equally short duration, for we find him living at No. 4, between 1813 and 1814. At that time a Miss Bayfield is given in the Rate Books as occupying the house, and it was with her, no doubt, that Byron lodged. At this period the poet was composing *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, and *The Corsair*, parts of which were probably written in the little house in what Byron used sometimes playfully to call Benedictine Street.[1]

From the poet's journal it would appear that he remained in Bennet Street till 28th March 1814, when he records taking possession of his new apartments in Albany.[2] He had first gone to No. 4 in April 1813, apparently, as a letter from him to Murray, dated the 21st of that month, mentions that he "shall be in town by Sunday next," and asks his publisher to "send in my account to Bennet Street." We are thus able, approximately, to trace Byron's residence here from April 1813 to March 1814.

The associations of Bennet Street are few though interesting; those of Arlington Street are as interesting and far more numerous.

ARLINGTON STREET

Arlington Street was formed in 1689, on ground which had been granted to Lord Arlington by Charles II. eight years earlier. Arlington, on becoming possessed of the property, almost immediately sold it to a Mr Pym who proceeded to develop it, and for long inhabited one of the larger houses erected in the street. The process of building was carefully watched by Sir Dudley North who, according to his brother Roger's testimony, took special interest in viewing the development of London. "Wherever there was a parcel of building going on he went to survey it, and particularly the high buildings in Arlington Street, which were scarce covered in before all the windows were wry-mouthed, fascias turned SS, and divers stacks of chimnies sunk right down, drawing roof and floors with them ; and the point was to find out whence all this decay proceeded."[1] Roger North adds that: "We (evidently he was his brother's companion on many of these inquiring rambles) had conversed so much with new houses that we were almost turned rope-dancers and walked as familiarly upon joists in garrets, having a view through all the floors, down to the cellar, as if it had been plain ground." It does not appear that the Norths satisfactorily found out the cause of the subsidence in Arlington Street. Whatever it was, it was, no doubt, rectified, as the houses were almost immediately taken, and by persons described in the manner of the period as "of the first quality." For instance, the Duchess of Cleveland, finding after Charles II.'s death that the upkeep of Berkshire House was too heavy a drain on her purse, took a house here and lived in it for five years (1691-1696). The year after she had come into residence she had as a neighbour the Duchess of Buckingham, widow of the second Duke and daughter of Fairfax, the great Parliamentary general, whose frivolities and eccentricities have been perpetuated by Dryden in a famous passage. She remained here but two years, and then the "little, round, crumpled woman, very fond of finery," as Bishop Percy describes her, went elsewhere till her death in 1705, just four years before her one-time neighbour, the Duchess of Cleveland, expired at Chiswick. Another distinguished resident in Arlington Street was the Marquis of Dorchester, better known as the Duke of Kingston, and best remembered as the father of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. *The Tatler* (for 5th August 1710) contains an advertisement indirectly referring to Lord Dorchester's house, as follows:—"In Arlington Street, next door to the Marquis of Dorchester, is a large house to be let, with a garden and door into the Park."

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[1] A letter to Moore, 8th July 1813, is so headed.

[2] See Moore's *Life of Byron*.

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[1] *Lives of the Norths*, vol. iii., p. 210.

About this time Hatton[1] describes the thoroughfare as being very graceful and pleasant, with excellent houses inhabited by nobility and gentry, running parallel with St James's Street, out of Portugal Street by which name this end of Piccadilly was still known.

Not only was Arlington Street then "well inhabited," as Strype is fond of phrasing it, but it continued to be and, as we all know, still is. In 1698 Lords Brook, Cholmondeley, Guildford, Kingston and Peterborough were all residing here; a year earlier Lord Monmouth was here, and Lord Dartmouth appears to have been one of the earliest residents in 1691. A reference to Lord Monmouth's house is contained in a letter dated 28th April 1697, from its owner to Ulysses Browne, relative to an assault on the Earl at Chelsea by Browne and others.[2] Lord Dartmouth was inhabiting what were then termed Arlington Buildings, a kind of forerunner of the modern flats, I presume. In the Dartmouth MSS. I find Lord Dartmouth complaining of his house in Arlington Street being searched and his papers examined and impounded, in 1691. He came up from the country with a Mr Ryley, who was to make the inquisition which appears to have been a very thorough one. The later history of Dartmouth's undoubted disloyalty to William III. is well known; he had plotted with James II. and was caught and thrown into the Tower, where he died of apoplexy.[1]

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[1] *New View of London*, 1708.

[2] Buccleuch MSS.

The peers mentioned above as living in Arlington Street in 1698, were all there ten years later, with the exception of Lord Peterborough, and, in addition, the Duke of Richmond, one of Charles II.'s sons, had come to live there. He, together with Lord Cholmondeley and Lord Guildford, were still residing there in 1724. The Duke of Kingston's house (to anticipate dates a little) remained in his family till 1770, when it was sold by the 2nd Duke for nearly £17,000.

In 1711 the Earl of Stair was living here, and three years later Lord Clarendon is found dating letters from his house in Arlington Street, and in the same year Baron Bothmer writes to Lord Dartmouth from here. But greater than these have shed lustre on the street. Pulteney, Earl of Bath, who occupied a house on the west side, from 1715 till he went to the larger mansion (now Bath House) in Piccadilly; and, a year later, Sir Robert Walpole, who came to reside next door and remained there till 1742, when he went over the way to No. 5. In the former of these dwellings Horace Walpole was born in 1717. It was on the ministerial side of the street, and only when Sir Robert went out of office did he retire to the "non-ministerial" side.[2] In the smaller house he died in 1746, leaving the property to Horace, who continued to make it his London headquarters till his removal to Berkeley Square in 1779. Horace Walpole's letters are full of allusions to No. 5 Arlington Street. From one of them

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[1] See Macaulay's *History*, vol. iv., pp. 20-23.

[2] In 1749 Sir William Codrington, M.P. for Beverley; John Pitt, Esq., M.P. for Wareham; and C. H. Walpole, Esq., M.P. for Callington, were among Arlington Street residents.

(to Mann, dated 6th January 1743) it appears that No. 5 had belonged for some time to Sir Robert, who had let it probably with a view to living there when he should have given up the reins of Government. From another letter (to Montagu, 1st December 1768) we find the street well keeping up its aristocratic character:

"Nothing can be more dignified than this position," complacently remarks Horace. "From my earliest memory Arlington Street has been the ministerial street. The Duke of Grafton is actually coming into the house of Mr Pelham, which my Lord President is quitting, and which occupies, too, the ground on which my father lived; and Lord Weymouth has just taken the Duke of Dorset's: yet you and I, I doubt, shall always be on the wrong side of the way."

In later days Sir Robert Walpole's second Arlington Street house became the London residence of Edward Ellice, Esq., M.P., and then of Sir R. G. Phillimore. On its front a tablet informs the passer-by that here once lived one of England's greatest Prime Ministers.

There seems to have been an idea of George Montagu's coming to the house next door but one to No. 5, for Horace Walpole writes to him (in the letter already quoted from) thus:

"I like your letter, and have been looking at my next door but one. The ground story is built, and the side walls will certainly be raised another floor before you think of arriving. I fear nothing for you but the noise of workmen, and of this street in front, and Piccadilly on the other side. If you can bear such a constant hammering and hurricane, it will rejoice me to have you so near me; and then I think I must see you oftener than I have done these ten years."

In the last house in the street on the Green Park side John, Lord Carteret, afterwards Earl Granville, lived.

He writes from here to Swift in 1724, and again in 1737,[1] and just ten years later he rebuilt the house. Mrs Pendarves tells Ann Granville, afterwards Mrs Delany, in August 1732, that: "Lady Carteret writes me word that she has bought the ground her house stood on in Arlington Street, and that my lord designs to build there." At a later period Lord Gage occupied this residence. Ten years later we find Mrs Pendarves informing Mrs Dewes that she dined at Lord Granville's on two consecutive days.

Another resident, of whom we get a glimpse in Mrs Delany's *Autobiography*, was Lady Weymouth, who was then (1769) busy moving from Pall Mall to the Duke of Dorset's old house in Arlington Street,[2] a piece of information already supplied us by Horace Walpole.

Pelham's house afterwards became the property of Lady Pomfret. It had been rebuilt,[3] in the pseudo-Gothic manner beloved of Walpole, by Kent, and is still a curious feature and not a very congruous one in a street that was never architecturally of much note. Later, W. Gerard Hamilton (Single-Speech Hamilton) occupied it, and letters from him dated from here in 1767 and 1772 are extant. In his time an accident occurred here, thus referred to by Walpole: "One of the Gothic towers of Lady Pomfret's house (now Single-Speech Hamilton's) in my street, fell through the roof, and not a thought of it remains." Later the house (No. 17) passed into the hands of the Earl of Yarborough, whose family still occupies it.

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[1] Mrs Delany's *Autobiography*, vol. i., p. 599.

[2] Mrs Delany to Lord Andover, 7th January 1769. In the List of Persons Paying Taxes for Male Servants in 1780, Lord Aylesford is given as paying for seventy-one (*sic*) and Mrs Clive for four, in Arlington Street.

[3] It had been rebuilt by Kent before Pelham came to live in it. Letters of Pelham to Viscount Irwin, dated 1745, and from the Duke of Grafton to the same in 1770, are headed Arlington Street.

The house next door, No. 18, was at one time the residence of Sir John Pender, Bart., M.P., who here collected a fine gallery of pictures, chiefly of the modern school. In 1906 the place was in possession of Sir Alexander Henderson, Bart., M.P. No. 19 is the town residence of the Marquis of Zetland, and No. 20 that of the Marquis of Salisbury. The present house is a rebuilt structure on the site of the former residence owned by the Cecil family, its reconstruction having been carried out about 1870. In the former house, in April 1786, George III., with other members of the Royal family, attended the christening of the daughter of the 1st Marquis of Salisbury, a child who eventually became Lady Cowley. Lady Salisbury of those days was a redoubtable leader of fashion and was known to her intimates as "Old Sarum." She is referred to in *The New Monthly Magazine* for 1821, where the writer remarks: "The man of fashion . . . lounges at the subscription house and votes Sunday a complete bore until it is time to drop in at the Marchioness in Arlington Street." Creevey, in 1821, calls her, not without reason, "the head and ornament and patroness of the *beau monde* of London for the last forty years." In Raikes' *Journal* and the innumerable memoirs and diaries of the period, the name of Lady Salisbury is of almost as frequent recurrence as that of Lady Jersey. The Marchioness, it will be remembered, was burnt to death at Hatfield in 1834. At No. 21, once the residence of M. Van der Weyer, the Belgian minister, and for long that of his son and daughter-in-law, Victor W. Van der Weyer and Lady Emily Van der Weyer, Lord Sefton—"The pet," as Creevey terms him—used to give those famous dinners, produced under the superintendence of Ude, at which most of the great ones of the time were guests. Lord Sefton, that gigantic humpback, as Gronow calls him, was not only a *gourmet* but a confirmed gambler, and towards the close of his life became a great *habitué* of the neighbouring Crockford's. He was, besides, a fine whip and was a power in the original Four-in-Hand Club in the days of the Regent.

No. 22, now known as Wimborne House, is the residence of the present (2nd) Lord Wimborne, whose father purchased it in 1867, while he was still Sir Ivor Guest. Originally it was the property of the Marquis Camden, son of the great judge, who died in 1840.[1] After him came the 7th Duke of Beaufort, who, as Lord Worcester, had been aide-de-camp to Wellington in the Peninsular War and after Vittoria had nearly succeeded in capturing Joseph Bonaparte as he fled from the field. He re-christened the house after his own name and reconstructed it, employing Owen Jones and Q. Latella to superintend its decoration. In 1852, however, a year before his death, he sold the house to the 11th Duke of Hamilton, the price paid being, it is said, £60,000. The latter in turn expended large sums on the mansion, in which evidences of his ownership may still be seen in some of the iron fire-backs which bear his coronet and the famous Hamilton motto: "Thorough." The Duke died in July 1863, and his widow, who had been Princess Marie of Baden, on the question of whose precedence in this country, she not being allied to one of royal birth, some interesting references will be found in Queen Victoria's letters, continued to reside here for a time.[2]

At the further end of Arlington Street is No. 16, the last house on that side facing the Park, now the residence of the Duke of Rutland. It formerly belonged to Lord Gage, and here, in 1827, while occupied by a former duke, occurred the death of the Duke of York, to whom the house had been lent in the previous year.

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[1] A letter from him to Lord Lowther is dated 24th January 1806 from here.

[2] See for a fuller account of the house and its contents, the author's *Private Palaces of London.*

Between the occupancy of the house by the former Duke of Rutland and the present holder of the title (who acquired it in 1897, when still Marquis of Granby) it was tenanted by Lord Dudley, and was at one time the property of Colonel John Sidney North, from whom it passed to Lord North.

In the Park—then known as Upper St James's Park—behind this house was fought the duel between Pulteney and Lord Hervey, on 25th January 1731, as recorded by Thomas Pelham in a letter to Lord Waldegrave. It has been stated that the encounter actually took place in the garden of No. 16, but this statement has not been corroborated.

Returning to the smaller houses opposite, and it is an interesting fact to remember that there is no record of the numbers ever having been changed, we find that at No. 6 once lived Lord Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, and friend of Pitt, and that appropriately in another close by (the actual number of which is, unfortunately, not ascertainable) Nelson lodged during the winter of 1800-1801. Mr Haslewood, one of Nelson's executors, in a communication to Sir Harris Nicolas, described the following scene as having taken place here:—

> "In the winter of 1800-1801 (Jan. 13th), I was breakfasting with Lord and Lady Nelson, at their lodgings in Arlington Street and a cheerful conversation was passing on indifferent subjects, when Lord Nelson spoke of something which had been done or said by 'dear Lady Hamilton,' upon which Lady Nelson rose from her chair and exclaimed with much vehemence: 'I am sick of hearing of dear Lady Hamilton and am resolved that you shall give up either her or me.' Lord Nelson, with perfect

calmness, said: 'Take care, Fanny, what you say; I love you sincerely, but I cannot forget my obligations to Lady Hamilton or speak of her otherwise than with affection and admiration.' Without one soothing word or gesture, but muttering something about her mind being made up, Lady Nelson left the room and shortly after drove from the house. They never lived together afterwards."

At No. 14 lived and died General Fitzpatrick, the friend of Fox, Sheridan (with whom he was concerned in some of those practical jokes beloved by Sherry), and the wits of that day. Fitzpatrick was a wit and a man of pleasure himself, and many are the references to him in these capacities, in Rogers's *Table Talk.* One entry in that amusing collection tells how Fitzpatrick remembered the time "when St James's Street used to be crowded with the carriages of the ladies and gentlemen who were walking in the Mall—the ladies with their heads in full dress and the gentlemen carrying their hats under their arms." Another records how one day, immediately preceding Fitzpatrick's death, Rogers walked to his house in Arlington Street to inquire after him, and just as he reached the door Fox came out, sobbing violently.

This anecdote brings me to Fox's own one-time residence here, which commenced in April 1804. The Opposition Campaign in conjunction with the Grenvilles had opened against the Addington Ministry, and Fox came to town to direct affairs, his Arlington Street residence (No. 9)[1] becoming the centre of political activity. He retained the house for two years, although he retired to the charms of St Anne's Hill as often as possible. Rogers relates how, on one occasion, he dined with Mr and Mrs Fox here and afterwards went with them to see young Betty, "the infant Roscius," act *Hamlet*, and how Fox surprised him during the performance by exclaiming: "This is finer than Garrick." On his vacating his seat in Parliament Fox's address to his constituents was dated from Arlington Street on 8th February 1806, but he evidently soon afterwards gave up the place, for when his death occurred in the following September his body was removed, we are told, from Chiswick "to the house recently occupied by him in the stable-yard, St James's."

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[1] A tablet indicates Fox's residence here.

Among other past residents in Arlington Street were David Mallet, who was living here from 1746 to 1747, and the 2nd Earl of Chatham; while to come to later days, John Motley, who was for a time at No. 17, and Prosper Mérimée, who was staying in 1860, at No. 18.

It will be seen that Horace Walpole's boast of the street's political significance is well substantiated; its fashionable character is equally prominent, and the outlook from the windows of the houses on the Park side fully confirms what the writer of the *New Review of the Public Buildings of London* says of it in the reign of George II., when he describes it as "one of the most beautiful situations in Europe for health, convenience and beauty, and combining together the advantages of town and country." The "want of uniformity" in its houses, which he notes, is to-day further enhanced by the towering structure of the Ritz Hotel, which dwarfs the adjacent buildings even more than did its predecessor, Walsingham House.

In these days of rebuilding it is probable that further alterations will come, so far as the elevations of the Arlington Street houses are concerned. When, and if, they do, one can only hope that No. 5, where the great Sir Robert lived, and his equally well-remembered son, Horace, so often gazed from the windows and noted the passing fashions, will be spared, not only to perpetuate their memory, but to recall what this side of the street looked like in earlier Georgian days.

PARK PLACE

A little way down St James's Street from Bennet Street is Park Place. It was formed in 1683, and in the Act for creating the parish of St James's (1 James II., cap. 22) it is spoken of as a new street. A curious fact about the thoroughfare is that its north side is in the parish of St George's and its south in that of St James's.

The earliest inhabitants I can trace from the Rate Books were Mr John Pulteney, who was paying £1, 8s.; Lord Clifford, who was paying £2, and Lord Brouncker (given as Lord Brounkhard), who was rated at £2, 10s. All these were living here in 1683, so they must have taken houses directly they were finished.

In the following year Lord Brouncker (this time the name is spelt correctly) is given, with the addition of "or tenant," in St James's Street, and is rated at £1, 10s. Of these John Pulteney, no doubt one of the family so long associated, as we have seen, with St James's Street, was in 1707 made one of the commissioners of trade in the place of a Mr Pryor.[1] Of Lord Clifford, previously Sir Thomas, at one time Lord Treasurer of the Household, the reader will find abundant details in the pages of Evelyn and Pepys, the former of whom records his leanings towards Papacy and his unhappy death by his own hand. He was the "C" in the notorious Cabal ministry and a person of importance in the days of the Merry Monarch. Lord Brouncker is as well known in a different direction, for he was first President of the Royal Society, in which connection he was much in the company of Evelyn who may, or one likes to think so, have visited him in his house in Park Place.

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[1] Narcissus Luttrell's *Diary*.

Another early resident here was Lady Orrery, and in 1685 I find, in addition, Colonel Fitzpatrick and Lord Burlington. Two years later the Earl of Carberry is given as residing here.[1] He was also a President of the Royal Society during his residence here. Before succeeding to the earldom he was known as Lord Vaughan, in which capacity he was a violent enemy of Clarendon and, according to Pepys, "one of the lewdest fellows of the age, worse than Sir Charles Sedley."

In the Rate Books for 1698 the following are the names of the principal residents in Park Place:—Lady Tankerville, the Earl of Orkney, the Duchess of Cleveland and the Marchioness of Halifax. Three years earlier quite a different set of names appear; they include Lady Mary Gray, Lord William Poulett, Colonel Pizza, Colonel John Fitzpatrick, Francis Thatcher, Esq., and — Hophman, Esq.

So much later as 1765 Sir George Baker is found writing from Jermyn Street to Edward Weston and saying: "I am desired to ask you, on behalf of Lady Middleton, whether you will let your house (in Park Place) on a lease of 12 years. Her Ladyship cannot afford to buy it; but would be glad to take it on the terms mentioned above."

Whether or not the negotiations were successful I am unable to say; certainly I have not come across the name of Lady Middleton as a tenant, so probably they fell through. The house seems to have been sought after, as in the previous December (1764) Lord Stanhope writes from St James's Street to Edward Weston in this strain concerning it: "Was my Brother in Town, I am sure he would desire me to return you his thanks for your Civility in giving him the Preferance of your house in Park Place.

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[1] At that time there were but eight houses in Park Place.

. . . In the Time of my ever to be regretted Friend, Mr Charles Stanhope, I should certainly have had it at any price, if I was so happy to have a Family to inhabit it, but it is much too large for a single man like me tho' I had it for nothing."

To come to a still later period we find Lieutenant-General Gage writing to John Robinson from Park Place in 1776, and in 1785, according to the Rate Books, Sir William Musgrave and Admiral Pigot were living there. Sir William, who is remembered as a great print-collector, was residing at No. 9, and to a small house three doors off (No. 12) Pitt retired in 1801, after he resigned the Treasury. Apparently he was then very poorly off, for Jesse[1] remarks, apropos this residence, that, there, at any time he might awake to find himself without a chair in his drawing-room or a horse in his stables, for at any moment an execution might be put in the small house he had taken here.

Another resident here for a time, but probably only in lodgings, was David Hume, who is recorded as living here in 1769.[2] In 1813 I find Lord Vernon, Colonel Gibson and Dr Paris among the street's inhabitants. Lord Vernon's house was the large one at the end of Park Place, which at a later date became the property of Lord Redesdale. According to the account of Dr Paris, in *The Gold-Headed Cane*, he *finally* settled in London in 1817, which indicates that he had been there at least temporarily before then, and it was in Park Place that at this time he lived. He was a distinguished doctor in town for a number of years, and succeeded Halford in the Chair of the Royal College of Physicians. It was at a house in Park Place, whither she had retired, that Mrs Elizabeth Neale, the "Betty" of St James's Street, about whom I have more to say in another chapter, died on 30th August 1797, aged sixty-seven, just fourteen years after she had given up her active career as flower-woman and gossip in the larger thoroughfare.

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[1] *Memoirs of George III.*

[2] The famous Coke of Norfolk was once residing at No. 14.

A far less worthy person is connected with Park Place in the person of the notorious "Mother Needham," whom Hogarth has pilloried in Plate 1 of *The Harlot's Progress*, and Pope in *The Dunciad*. Two entries from contemporary news-sheets sufficiently indicate the "business" of this most undesirable resident.

In Fog's *Weekly Journal* for 1st May 1731 we read: "The noted Mother Needham, convicted (April 20th, 1731) for keeping a disorderly house in Park Place, St James's, was fined 1s., to stand twice in the Pillory—viz. once in St James's Street over against the End of Park Place, and once in the New Palace Yard, Westminster, and to find sureties for her Good Behaviour for three years."

The other entry carries on the information a step. It is from *The Grub Street Journal*, and reads thus: "Yesterday (May 6th, 1731) the noted Mother Needham stood in the Pillory in Park Place,[1] near St James's Street, and was roughly handled by the populace. She was so very ill that she lay along on her face, and so evaded the law which requires that her face should be exposed." Before she could undergo the second part of her sentence she died. The note to Pope's two lines about her in *The Dunciad* reads thus:

"She was a matron of great fame, and very religious in her way; whose constant prayer it was, that she might get enough by her profession to leave it off in time, and make her peace with God. This, however, was not granted to her, as she died from the effects of her exposure in the pillory."

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[1] This shows us where the Pillory stood in St James's Street.

As a set-off to such a resident it is interesting to record that in a dwelling near Vernon House,[1] the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts had its headquarters, having removed from No. 79 Pall Mall about the year 1870. Four years later the Road Club was established at No. 4, so that the street may be said to have been, in the past, decidedly eclectic.

Three other clubs are connected with Park Place. Of these Pratts' was founded about 1841 and occupies premises at No. 14. It is one of those clubs that delight in preserving the old features which obtained at the period of their inception, and in its arrangement, furniture and decoration carries out this principle admirably. The Primrose, occupying Nos. 4 and 5 Park Place, is, as its name suggests, of a political origin, although there is rather a social than a party air about it now. It was formed in 1885, the late Duke of Beaufort largely interesting himself in its success. The Pioneer, a ladies' club at No. 9, was inaugurated in 1892, and certainly I am not the one to draw aside the veil that hides its mysteries. The fact is I can't, as I know nothing about it; beyond assuming that by its name it indicates those progressive theories which obtained among a certain section of the fairer sex, before more stern realities threw them into the background.

ST JAMES'S PLACE

Passing Stable Yard [2] (not to be confounded with the better-known place of that name within the precincts of the Palace—where C. J. Fox once lived, at Godolphin

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[1] The residence of the Dowager Lady Hillingdon.

[2] In 1685 it consisted of small tenements, the occupiers of which paid from ten shillings down to two shillings in rates. In 1695 there were eight houses rated in it.

House), known also as Blue Boar Yard,[1] under which title it appears in Rhodes' plan of 1770, and which it still bears, we come to what is in many respects the most interesting of the lesser streets which branch from the main thoroughfare. It appears to have been built later than most of them, the Rate Books indicating its formation about 1694. The number of its interesting, often famous, inhabitants, and particularly the constellation of wit and power which gathered round the board or admired the works of art, of Samuel Rogers, combine in giving St James's Place an almost unique character. Indeed, with regard to the poet and his house, quite a little literature has grown up, and therefore when I come to speak of his residence, in this chapter, I shall simply state the fact, leaving for that part of the book in which I deal more particularly with the famous men and women of the past the record of the house and its contents and the notice of its benevolent but bitter-tongued owner.

Among the earliest residents in St James's Place were Sidney, 1st Earl Godolphin, and his brother, Charles Godolphin, who must have been two of the first residents. In 1695 I find, by the Rate Books, that the following were also here:—Colonel Venner, the Earl of Inchequin, the Earl of Nottingham, George Pitt, Madame Hennage (Heneage), Colonel Farrington, the Hon. John Smith, Sir Robert Rich, Sir Robert Terrell, Captain South and — Molesworth, Esq. (spelt Moldsworth). Three years later Robert Molesworth, who afterwards became 1st Viscount Molesworth, addresses a letter to his wife "at her house in St James's Place."

Another early resident was Thomas Coke, to whom Lieutenant R. Pope writes "at his house in (3) St James's Place," on 26th May 1696. With regard to this residence we have some interesting details in the Cowper MSS. It would appear that Coke was making some additions to his property which did not commend themselves to his neighbours. The following letters from his clerk of the works, Edward Goudge, and Luke Barrow, apparently a caretaker, not only illustrate the difficulties Mr Coke had to contend with, but also incidentally indicate the people who were then living in St James's Place. Thomas Coke was, of course, the famous "Coke of Norfolk," afterwards 1st Earl of Leicester, whom we have found staying in Park Place. The letters tell their own tale, so I give them as they appear in Earl Cowper's MSS., issued by the Historical Manuscripts' Commission:

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[1] Stanford's large map of 1868 gives it as *Blue Bell Yard,* and it is so called to-day.

1698, *June* 28. *Beaufort buildings.*—EDWARD GOUDGE *to* THOMAS COKE *at Melbourne*

On Saturday the carpenters having put up good part of the frame of your building [in St James's Place] some of the neighbourhood seemed to be much offended at it, and yesterday Mr Stroud the bricklayer came to me from them to desire me to desist, otherwise they would run up a wall in the next garden to hinder your prospect. I told him you build out of necessity, not curiosity: and that we should have ten foot in our own ground to light us, notwithstanding his blind. However I condescended to the taking the carpenters from their work till I heard from you. In the meantime I will take as good advice as I can about it, but I cannot see what injury you can do your neighbours by your building, nor can I believe any man will be so mad as to lay out so much money as to build a wall before you to so little purpose.

1698, *July* 9. *London.*—JOHN COKE *to* THOMAS COKE *at the* EARL OF CHESTERFIELD'S *at Bretby*

Mr Nicholas Harding informed me yesterday that your neighbours in St James's Place complain of those buildings which you are a going to make there. One Mrs Stroud is the most concerned: she says that the apartment which you are a going to make up will command her house and garden: she threatens that if you go on as you design, she will run up a wall 25 or 30 foot high, which will quite spoil that little prospect, which you have, and very much darken your rooms. . . . Mr Harding told me he had desired Mrs Stroud not to do anything in this matter till she had made you acquainted how matters stand. Pray my humble service to Lady Mary and the rest of my friends and relations in Derbyshire.

1698, *July* 19. *Beauford Buildings.*—Edward Goudge *to* Thomas Coke, *at Bretby Manor, by Burton bagg*

I find the Lord Godolphin, Sir Robert Terrill, and Mr Charles Godolphin are your neighbours. At first Mr Stroud told me that they were the only persons disturbed, but since I hear nothing from anybody but Mr Charles Godolphin, I understand from the people I put into the house that all this disturbance is occasioned by his lady, who it seems cannot be satisfied till she sees your building down. Their builder came to tell me they would pull down our building on Monday. On Sunday I went and laughed at him for his news. He told me seriously that he had seen their lease, and they had so many foot of ground as reached the inside of our wall. . . . To prevent a law suit I have contented myself with the loss of about five inches, and taken the timber off the wall; and set it wholly on our own ground, for 10s. charge or less. . . . To do as much mischief as they can another way, here hath been one from your backside neighbour to let us know that the wall was wholly theirs. . . . If you have not your lease, let me know where I can see it here in town, and who your lawyer is, that I may advise with him. My opinion is that they cannot hurt us, but that all this bustle is to oblige the peevish proud temper of a woman. Mr Stroud told me that there was a contract between the builders that they should not make any addition above so many foot high. I shall keep the men at work, and desire a line or two.

1698, *July* 23. *Beauford Buildings.*—EDWARD GOUDGE *to* THOMAS COKE, *at Bretby Manor, by Burton bagg*

I have had two meetings lately with an attorney who acts for the ground landlord on the back side of our building, who says that the wall that our building stands upon next Madame Luttrell's ground is theirs, and not our own as Mr Stroud, our ground landlord, told me it was. I, therefore, desire that somebody belonging to the law may be judges of their writings, which their attorney offers to show at any time. I answered that if they proved the wall to be theirs, Mr Coke would take the building off the wall and set it further into his own ground, and that whosoever employed him would miss of their aim for our building would go forward. I do not think that the removing the whole frame of our building will cost more than forty shillings. I am now well assured Mr Charles Godolphin's lady is the cause of all this trouble.

1698, *August* 6. *Beauford Buildings in the Strand.*—EDWARD GOUDGE *to* THOMAS COKE, *at Bretby Manor, by Burton bagg*

. . . The attorney, who is employed by the ground landlord of the next ground, and I have had several meetings and I hope on Monday shall make a final determination of the matter. But the ground landlord, Mr Waller, lives in Buckinghamshire, who I understand is a very hot man; but I find the attorney quite the contrary; otherwise you would infallibly have entered into a law suit, or I must have made a hasty submission. . . .

1698, *August* 17. *Rochester.*—Edward Goudge *to* Thomas Coke, *at Bretby*

. . . I left the men once again in good order, with a strict charge to go on with all speed imaginable, and after a little time I shall be able to give a better guess what time we shall finish. . . . Madam Godolphin is still as troublesome as she can, saying she hath bought Mr Waller's ground as I am informed. But I took a note under the attorney's hand to acquit you from any further trouble, after the removing the encroachment, which is done, and your building stands wholly within the walls.

1698, *August* 24. *London.*—Luke Barrow *to* Thomas Coke *at Bretby*

. . . I am in your house at this time in 3 James Place, being put in by Mr Goudge. Your building doth go on now though it hath been three times hindred and caused to be altered, by some unworthy and envious persons, concerning which I suppose there hath been more malice than matter in it, their aim and end that you might have no building at all there. And especially one family near neighbours, particularly the gentlewoman, of the house, with her husband, Mr Godolphin, who lately, when one of the workmen was nailing some boards on that end of the building next to their garden, stood with a pistol ready cocked, and said he would shoot any man that should dare to put out his head or his hand over the garden to drive a nail there. I never perceived so much envy appear in my life as hath been ever since it began. . . .

1698, *August* 29. *Rochester.*—Edward Goudge *to* Thomas Coke *at Bretby Manor*

Since there were no thoughts of making a scaffold on Mr Godolphin's ground to plaister that end, I ordered it to be weather boarded; which when the carpenters were going about to do by standing within our own building and putting their heads between the quarters to nail the boards, Mr Godolphin came out with a pistol and swore he would shoot that man through the head that should offer but to swing his hand over his ground to drive a nail, whereupon the carpenters being scared from their work, I ordered it to be bricked up between the quarters, which is done; and that side boarded next Madam Luttrell's garden, so that now I hope all the disturbance is over. This surly troublesome neighbour of yours hath so hindered us that it will be too hard a task for us to get the house quite finished by the 27th of September. . . .

1698, *September* 3. *St James's Place.*—LUKE BARROW *to* EDWARD GOUDGE

Mr Godolphin is now erecting his monument of malice; and he hath prevailed with our neighbour on the left hand to build along that wall, and the end of his fabric is fastened into his house: the manner of their building is long poles, and they are preparing to board it. The gentlewoman is very jocund, and full of laughter, and they all seem to be much pleased with what they are doing. But I told them all aloud, I believed they would have little cause to rejoice in the end. . . .

What the result of this dispute was does not appear; at least there is no further correspondence concerning it, and as by the following letter the faithful Goudge is shown busying himself about the internal decorations and furnishing of Mr Coke's house, it is probable that an amicable settlement was arrived at.

1698, *September* 22. *London.*—EDWARD GOUDGE *to* THOMAS COKE, *at the* EARL OF CHESTERFIELD'S *at Bretby Manor, Burton Bagg*

. . . I have taken care that your household necessaries be as ready for you as your building, viz.: jack, jackwheel, spits, racks, boiler, stoves, cistern, etc. I do not doubt but some other things will come into my mind, supposing you are not provided with any thing for this house but hangings, beds, pictures, chairs, etc. I desire you would be pleased to answer these following queries, viz.:—

1. How must the Japan pictures be disposed of?
2. Shall there be a glass pier in the lower room in the new building, as it is ordered above in the middle storey?
3. Would you have sash doors in the closet of that storey for a library?
4. Would you have any prints pasted before you come?
5. Would you have glass in the piers of the dining room, as also over the marble chimney piece there?

It is a very dear ornament, therefore I do not advise it, except it be mighty agreeable to yours, and my Lady's inclinations.

In 1710 Addison was living in St James's Place, probably in lodgings, and two letters of his to Joseph Keally are dated from here on 23rd and 27th April of that year.[1] It appears that at this time Eustace Budgell, his relation and secretary, was residing with him. According to Spence, Addison used to have Davenant, Steele, Carey, and Captain Brett to breakfast with him in St James's Place, and that besides Budgell, Philips used to stay there.

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[1] They are given in Berkeley's *Literary Relics*, pp. 384-388

Another resident about the same time was Thomas Parnell, the poet, who was also, it will be recalled, Archdeacon of Clogher in 1706, which gives point to the remark of Jervas to Pope that he had "not yet seen the dear Archdeacon, who is at his lodgings in St James's Place." Other contemporary inhabitants were Admiral Churchill, brother of the great Marlborough, who died in 1710; Secretary Craggs, William Cleland, another of Pope's friends—who in 1739 writes to Dr Birch, giving him the following directions to find his lodgings:—"Come as far up St James's Place, as you can, still keeping on the right side, turn up at the end which lands you at a little court of which the middle door is that of my house"—and White Kennett, Bishop of Peterborough and author of Kennett's *Register*, who is stated, in *London Past and Present*, to have died in a house here on 19th December 1728.

But one more interesting than the poet's friend or the learned bishop once resided in St James's Place, notably the beautiful Molly Lepel, who became Lady Hervey, and whose name is so closely associated with the Court and fashionable life of George II.'s day. The history of her house here is told in her *Letters*.[1] She built it herself from designs by Flitcroft, during 1747-1748. Writing on 10th December of the former year, she says: "I have a dozen plans, a compass, rules, &c., lying before me, and expect Mr Flitcroft every instant," which indicates the approximate commencement of the work. On 2nd April 1748 we find her in the midst of it. "I must now quit you for Mr Flitcroft, angles, feet, greystock bricks, cornice, fascias, copeings and what not, only torments me at present but I fear will undo me in the end. My old house is now a heap of ruins and dust; but I hope out of its ashes there will soon arise a Phœnix house, where you will often eat as plain a dinner, see as fine a prospect, and as beautiful a verdure as at Nursling. I build but part of my house at present; time, economy, or my heir must finish it." It will thus be seen that Lady Hervey's house was erected on the site of a residence she already owned here. A year later, she speaks of having paid dear to make her new dwelling *look* as like the country as she can; but *surgit amari aliquid,* "I have been too much used to grass and green trees to bear the changing them for brick walls and dust," she moans. At the end of another year she writes to a friend thus: "Pray go and visit my house, and then tell me sincerely what you think of it. I must inform you first that it is but two parts in three of it that is carried up; the rest remains to be done about two years and a half hence; so that the great stairs, an antechamber to my great room, and a servant's room to the bedchamber, are all as yet unbuilt: make these allowances, and then tell me if you like it. If you say, as you did once before, that you wish I had made a bow window, consider what would have been the consequence of it; instead of those windows which now afford me as fine a view as possible, I should have had but one window that would have looked towards Chelsea and the country: from one of the oblique windows I should have looked into Sir John Cope's room, and have afforded him a view of mine: from the other I should have seen the Duke of Devonshire's house, when the dust of Piccadilly would have permitted it."

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[1] Published in 1821, and edited by J. W. Croker.

After the death of Lady Hervey (2nd September 1768)[1] Lord Carlisle took her house. He writes to his friend Selwyn, on the 13th October of that year: "By this time you will be empowered to take Lady Hervey's house for me, which I think is too good to lose for a little more money"; and in another letter, written six days later, he adds: "I agree with you it is very extravagant to give two hundred a year to see a cow under my windows, but still I am very happy to have the house, and hope you will like the present owner as well as you did the last one."[1] Subsequent letters indicate that about 1775 Lord Carlisle thought of giving up the house, as his losses at cards made it necessary for him to curtail his expenses, but he was still there in 1780.

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[1] A year earlier, Lady Sarah Bunbury tells Selwyn that the Princess Poniatowska was then residing "next to Lord Spencer's" in St James's Place.

It seems that the Duke of Bedford once contemplated purchasing the house, for Selwyn, writing to Lady Carlisle in 1786, says that he (the Duke) "will buy a house near Brooks's, that he may not have so far to go from thence at nights, as to Bloomsbury Square, and would have given ten thousand pounds for that in St James's Place in which you lived."

Subsequently Lady Hervey's house, "that charming house—the Hotel de Miladi," as Lord March called it, was occupied by the Earl of Moira, formerly Lord Rawdon,[2] the Regent's friend; and at a later date still it was divided into two residences.

At the time of Lady Hervey's occupation Sir John Cope, as we gather from one of the letters just quoted, was her next-door neighbour, and in 1756 John Walker was staying here "at Mrs Murray's — in very elegant lodgings." In 1783 I find Lord Lucan writing to Mr Pery from here and mentioning that "at this moment (19th April) there are about 2000 sailors parading in St James's Street," and that "their grievances are ill-founded and therefore difficult to settle."

Two years later the Rate Books prove that the fashionable character of St James's Place was well maintained. Living there at that time were Lady Amelia Hervey, Lady

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[1] *Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, by Jesse, vol. ii., pp. 332-336.

[2] He writes to William Knox from here, in 1790.

Euphemia Stuart, Thomas Townshend,[1] rented at £30; Lord Spencer, paying £500 rental; Mr Rigby,[2] paying £150; the Earl of Northington, paying £180; Lord Vere, paying £165; the Earl of Huntingdon, Lady Betty Fitzwilliam, Sir Robert Gunning and, last but not least, Mrs Delany, paying £30 rent.

We first find Mrs Delany here in 1749, in which year she writes to Mrs Dewes, from Bulstrode, that her house is in St James's Place, the landlady's name Lynch. The first letter written by her from her new residence is also addressed to Mrs Dewes on 16th January 1750; but by the following May she is back at Delville. I think, therefore, that this sojourn was a temporary one, probably with a view to see how she liked St James's Place as a permanent residence, and that it had nothing to do with the house she subsequently took there. Two years later Mrs Delany tells her friends that she shall have a house secured for her near St James's Chapel and the Park, and this she finally did, in Suffolk Street apparently, at a higher rent than she had paid for the St James's Place lodging.[3]

When exactly she entered into possession of the house in St James's Place which was to be her London residence for so many years is not quite clear; she seems to have been in one in Thatched House Court till June 1771, in which month she writes to Lady Andover thus: "I suppose your ladyship cannot be ignorant of so important a transaction as the present possessor of the '*little Thatch*' having purchased some old walls in St James's Place, in order to remove thither by the end of July." So that this approximately marks the date of the change. She was busy with her workmen during June, as she tells Lady Andover in a subsequent letter; but the first letter from the new house is dated 7th December 1771, so that probably the alterations took longer than had been anticipated. In the following January Mrs Delany felt two earthquake-like shocks, and her maid, rushing into her room, informed her that the house was coming down. However, it was not so bad as that, and proved to be the effects of an explosion of some powder-mills at Hounslow.[1] The Hotel Delany, as Mrs Boscawen called it, continued to be Mrs Delany's winter headquarters till her death. Here visited from time to time the blue-stocking Mrs Montagu and the learned Mrs Chapone, Lady Bute, the clever daughter of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and Mrs Carter, the translator of Epictetus, Mrs Boscawen and Hannah More, the Duchess of Portland and Fanny Burney (who has left a famous record of her first call on dear Mrs Delany). Soame Jenyns came here, and Horace Walpole's conversation is said never to have been more pleasing or amusing than at his old friend's tea-table, and here Lord North kept awake and was witty and mirthful. Here, too, Mrs Delany, at the request of Dr Burney, dictated her recollections of Anastasia Robinson, as well as the strange story of the marriage of that beautiful singer with the eccentric Earl of Peterborough.

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[1] He was afterwards Lord Sydney, and is one of those mentioned in Goldsmith's *Retaliation*.

[2] Rigby was writing letters from here two years earlier. In a list of persons paying tax on men-servants for 1780, I find General de Buede, Hon. Ann Boscawen, the Hon. Mrs Beauclerk, Colonel Peter, and the Earl of Carlisle given as living in St James's Place; while in the previous year (23rd December), Walpole, writing to Lady Ossory, says (speaking of Lord Bristol's will), "Lord Bristol has given his mother's (Lady Hervey's) house in St James's Place to his brother, Col. Hervey."

[3] On 14th October 1752 she tells Mrs Dewes that "cousin Foley has another call to London, and the Maid of Honour has taken a house for them in St James's Place."

During the Gordon Riots there seems to have been no little apprehension felt that the neighbourhood of St James's would share the fate of Newgate and Bloomsbury

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[1] 5th January 1772.

Square, and Mrs Delany, writing to Mrs Port of Ilam, on 8th June 1780, tells how the Duchess of Portland, leaving London for Bulstrode, insisted on her accompanying the party, "as some houses in St James's Place and Street were threatened." By the 23rd of the month, however, Mrs Delany was back in town, and writes from St James's Place, where, she says: "I am come to see how the new painting of my drawing-room comes on."

The last mention of the house is on 19th August 1785 before Mrs Delany went to the cottage prepared for her by George III. and Queen Charlotte at Windsor in the following September. The St James's Place house was, however, retained and Mrs Delany went up to it occasionally or lent it (as she did to Mrs Granville in 1787) to friends. In the winter of this year she was there, and letters dated by her on 3rd February and 22nd March 1788 from here are extant. On 15th April she breathed her last here.[1] By her will she ordered the repayment of £400 which her friend the Duchess of Portland had advanced to her for the purchase of the house in St James's Place. Apparently she left the residence to her niece, Miss Port of Ilam, as among the Delany correspondence is a letter from an old friend, Mrs Weddell, endeavouring to persuade Miss Port to leave the St James's Street house and to go and reside with her in Stratton Street.

Fanny Burney has left us a long and minute description of Mrs Delany's London house. It is dated 19th January 1783 and will be found in the *Diary*. Suffice it here to say that the writer paid her visit in company with Mrs Chapone; that she found Mrs Delany alone in her drawing-room, "which is entirely hung round with pictures of her own painting and ornaments of her own designing"; that Mrs Delany showed her the new method she had invented of cutting out designs in coloured paper so as to imitate flowers in a most life-like manner, as well as some portraits (one of "Sacharissa" and one of Madame de Sévigné); which seem to have struck the authoress of *Evelina* particularly. The Duchess of Portland came in later and Fanny Burney sets down, with something of the precision and ingenuousness of Pepys, the flattering things which the great ladies said to her about her books and her genius.

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[1] See *Letters of Mrs Delany*, published in 1820.

At the time when Mrs Delany was occupying her house we find Charles James Fox writing (1783) from St James's Place, where he had a temporary lodging. About the same period it appears that Warren Hastings was, curiously enough, close by his future antagonist, having come to lodge in the street on his arrival in England to meet the charges subsequently brought against him at his impeachment. In *The Rolliad* there is the following reference to the great proconsul's sojourn in St James's Place[1]:

> "Or in thy chosen Place, St James,
> Be carolled loud amid th'applauding Imhoffs."

In a note to this passage we read: "He did not know Mr Hastings's house to be in St James's Place; he did not know Mrs Hastings to have two sons by Mynheer Imhoff, her former husband, still living; and, what is more shameful than all, in a critical assessor, he had never heard of the poetical figure by which I elegantly say *the Place, St James*, instead of St James's Place."

In 1795 William Windham, writing to Lord Grenville, speaks of a M. de Tuisaye, "who will be to be heard of at any time at Mr Saladin's at No. — St James's Place"; and in the same year Lord St Helens writes also to Lord Grenville from here. In the following year the Rate Books reveal the presence of the following residents:—Lady Amelia

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[1] Arthur, proprietor of White's Chocolate House, died at his house in St James's Place, in June 1761.

Hervey, General Mordaunt, Earl Stopford (?), Lord Malden, the Duke of St Albans, the Earl of Moira, General Johnson, and Roger Wilbraham, Esq., at No. 11, from 1796 to 1800. Another interesting inhabitant, probably only as a lodger, was Isaac D'Israeli, who writes a letter (undated) to Lady Blessington from St James's Place. At No. 34 Lord Cochrane, better known as the Earl of Dundonald, was once living, and it was to this house, according to a writer in *London Past and Present,* "that the swindler De Berenger came on 21st February 1814, and obtained the disguise by which he hoped to elude the agents of the Stock Exchange." The same authority speaks of Mrs Robinson, the actress, once living at No. 13, the assumption being that this was the lady who became the mistress of George; Prince of Wales. I am, however, more inclined to identify her with Mrs Anastasia Robinson, the singer, who was afterwards the wife of the eccentric Earl of Peterborough.[1]

Coming to later days we have Captain Marryat at No. 38, in 1832, before he went to Duke Street, and Captain Basil Hall at No. 4 in the previous year. At No. 25, the house which had been built by Lord Guildford, Sir Francis Burdett lived for a number of years, and died on 23rd January 1844; while from 1822 to 1832 Sir John Lubbock resided at No. 23.

But the two most famous houses in St James's Place are Spencer House and Rogers' old home, No. 22. The former was designed by J. Vardy for the 1st Earl Spencer; and was begun about the end of 1755 or early in the following year. "It will be superb when finished," writes Mrs Delany, who, in September 1756, went to see the progress of the place and then found the ground floor completed.

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[1] See Mrs Delany's recollections of this lady, dictated at the request of Dr Burney, and incorporated in his *History of Music,* vol. iv., p. 247. Mr Wheatley in his *Round About Piccadilly,* says Mrs Robinson was living at No. 14, in 1796.

Although Vardy was responsible for the body of the house, the St James's Place façade was the work of James Stuart, the architect, and so elaborate was the work that the house was not habitable for several years. Elmes, speaking of "this magnificent mansion," says: "I have heard it asserted that the shell of Spencer House, consisting of solid stone, cost alone 50,000 guineas," while Mr Blomfield speaks of its internal arrangements as being "more modern than any place of the time."[1]

Magnificent as is Spencer House, with its elaborate decorations by Zucchi, and interesting from its political memories, it can hardly vie with the small residence close by, where Rogers lived and entertained all, or nearly all, the notable men and women of his long-drawn-out day.

In was in 1802 that Rogers,[2] in conjunction with Sir John Lubbock, purchased a house in St James's Place, overlooking the Green Park. As the friends divided the residence I assume that one half of the original building became the residence of Lubbock and the other that of Rogers. This latter portion is numbered 22 and represents, from the beauty and rarity of its contents as well as from the illustrious character of its many visitors in the past, one of the most interesting of London's many interesting dwellings. The care the poet expended on his house is recorded in a variety of memoirs and letters of the period. Clayden[3] tells us how Rogers set to work to make his house worthy of the beautiful objects with which he intended filling it. "He had made notes of household arrangements he had seen in houses in which he had visited," writes his biographer, "had given much study to questions of decoration and ornament, and had designed the furniture himself, with the assistance of Hope's work on the subject." The drawing-room mantelpiece was designed by Flaxman; Stothard planned and painted one of the cabinets; the skilled hand of Chantrey carved the dining-room sideboard, which the sculptor in after days, when he had become famous and a guest of Rogers, pointed out to his host as his work. Greek vases dotted the house; much of the furniture was modelled from the same classic source; the staircase was decorated with a frieze copied from a famous original among the Elgin Marbles. The pictures were worthy of their carefully prepared setting. Examples of Titian and Raphael, Correggio and Guido, Veronese and Barocchio, and even of Giotto's tentative imaginings, rubbed shoulders with the florid wonders of Rubens and Reynolds' distinguished canvases. Here was the superb little *Knight in Armour* which Scott admired so much; there the small Raphael which Rogers hoped he might have in the room in which he died; in a portfolio were preserved Flaxman's original designs from Homer; in elaborate cases were rare and beautifully bound books, and on them ornaments which showed the artistic and selective character of their collector. Well might Byron exclaim: "If you enter his house, his drawing-room, his library, you of yourself say, 'This is not the dwelling of a common mind.' There is not a gem, a coin, a book thrown aside on his chimney-piece, his sofa, his table, that does not bespeak an almost fastidious elegance in the possessor." Macaulay and Sumner, Moore and Ticknor, and a hundred others, who knew the host and his possessions, have combined in recording the exquisite taste exhibited in the furnishing and decoration of No. 22 St James's Place. Hardly will you take up a volume of memoirs or reminiscences of the period but you find some mention of the place in terms of eulogy and admiration. For Rogers was acquainted with everybody. In later life he became an institution, and people forgave the bitterness of his tongue, because those who knew him well understood the inherent goodness of his heart, and casual acquaintances regarded, perhaps, a rude retort as a small thing as against the pleasure of enjoying an artistic treat or listening to the voice of one who had known intimately so many illustrious people. What Holland House was on a large scale, so was the St James's Place shrine on a small one. Here Byron had refused to eat anything but mashed potatoes soaked in vinegar; here Sydney Smith had uttered his famous *mot* with reference to the lighting of Rogers' dinner-table; here Fanny Burney had dined to meet Mrs Crewe of "True Blue" fame, and Mrs Barbauld; here Moore met Byron and Campbell and Wordsworth and here were held those breakfasts beginning at ten, when "so agreeable and fascinating was the conversation of the host that the repast seldom ended before noon and sometimes extended so late as 1 o'clock."[1]

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[1] I have given a full account of Spencer House in my *Private Palaces of London,* and therefore do not say more about the place here.

[2] Another banker once lived, *circa* 1790, in one of the houses on the west side of St James's Place, notably Mr Robert Smith, M.P. for Nottingham, and later created by George III. (very unwillingly) Lord Carrington.

[3] *Early Life of Rogers.*

"What a delightful house it is!" exclaims Macaulay. "It looks out on the Green Park just at the most pleasant spot. The furniture has been selected with a delicacy of taste quite unique. Its value does not depend on fashion but must be the same while the fine arts are held in any esteem. In the drawing-room, for example, the chimney-pieces are carved by Flaxman into the most beautiful Grecian forms. The bookcase is painted by Stothard in his very best manner, with groups from Chaucer, Shakespeare and Boccaccio. The pictures are not numerous, but every one is excellent. In the dining-room there are also some beautiful paintings. But the three most remarkable objects in that room are, I think, a cast of Pope taken after death, by Roubiliac; a noble model in terra-cotta, by Michael Angelo, from which he afterwards made one of his finest statues, that of Lorenzo de Medici; and lastly a mahogany table on which stands an antique vase."

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[1] Mackay, *Through the Long Day*.

For fifty-three years did Rogers dwell amid his treasures, hardly passing a day without receiving in St James's Place some notable guest. In 1855 he was in his ninety-third year and "he was still in his London house waiting, without fear—indeed, with actual desire—for the approaching change. It came on Tuesday morning, the 18th of December, when he passed quietly and peacefully away."[1]

After Rogers' death his collections were dispersed; some pictures, including *The Knight in Armour*, were bequeathed by him to the National Gallery; and his famous home, which had originally (together with No. 23) as one house belonged to the Duke of St Albans, passed to alien hands.

Mr Wheatley reminds me that by the side of the house was formerly a pathway into the Green Park. The gate has now been locked for many years, and once a writer in *Notes and Queries*, who had used it daily between the years 1810 and 1823, asked by "whose authority this convenient passage has been closed," without, apparently, receiving any satisfactory reply. Apropos of rights-of-way the following story is given by Wraxall in his *Posthumous Memoirs of his Own Time*:—

"Sir Richard Phillipps, a Welsh baronet of ancient descent, when member for Pembrokeshire in the year 1776, having preferred a request to his Majesty, through the first minister, Lord North, for permission to make a carriage-road up to the front of his house, which looked into St James's Park, met with a refusal. The King, apprehensive that if he acceded to Sir Richard's desire it would form a precedent for many similar applications, put a negative on it; but Lord North, in delivering the answer, softened it by adding that if he wished to be created an Irish peer no difficulty would be experienced. This honour being thus tendered him he accepted it and was forthwith made a baron of that kingdom by the title of Lord Milford. His intimate friend and mine, the late Sir John Stepney, related this fact to me not long after it took place."[1]

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[1] Clayden, *Rogers and his Contemporaries.*

On the south side of St James's Place a small *cul-de-sac* was known as Cleveland Court, and here, according to Mrs Delany, a Mrs Stock took a house in 1749, thus proving its one-time residential character. It is clearly marked in Horwood's plan, and is not to be confounded with the Cleveland Court described by Elmes as being "almost eight houses on the left hand from St James's Street," which ran from Cleveland Row northwards and is now bounded on the west by Bridgwater House.

The next turning out of St James's Street is Little St James's Street, which is given in 1831 as being about eleven houses on the left hand going from St James's Palace to Piccadilly. Connected with it was Catherine Wheel Yard Lane, interesting because Mrs Delany once took a house here in 1768. At an earlier period, as we have seen, she was in St James's Place and also at a later, and it seems likely, therefore, that if the house she occupied at these periods was the same, she must have given it up or let it for a time. The reference we have to the place in Catherine Wheel Lane is contained in a letter to her sister, dated from Whitehall, 14th October 1768, in which she says:

"I was told yesterday of (a house), and went to see it; the place is called Catherine Wheel Lane; it is behind the

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[1] In 1863 the Public Schools Club was established at No. 17 St James's Place, in a house which had previously been the residence of Lord Lyttelton.

Thatched House Tavern in St James's Street; but it is not near enough to be at all incommoded by it; it is very small, but both prettily and conveniently situated; the front faces a cross street now called Little St James's Street, and the back looks into the Duke of Bridgewater's garden *very pleasantly*, and a coach drives very well to the door, and people of fashion live in the row. The landlord is a man of good character, and is going to fit it up, and will make any alterations I shall desire; it is to be entirely new painted, etc., and the best rooms new sashed; it has been built about five and thirty years. It cannot possibly be finished before Christmas, at which time, if I agree with him, the rent will commence; but I shall not hurry into it. . . . The Landlord is to paper the rooms in the manner I like."

The house was taken, but on the following 19th January Mrs Delany still writes from Whitehall. However, on 16th June 1769 she dates a letter from T. H. C. (Thatched House Court), and again, on 27th December, she tells Lady Andover how good she is to bestow so much of her time and thoughts "on the solitary inhabitant of the Little Thatch."

It seems that Thatched House Court was connected with Little St James's Street by Catherine Wheel Lane, so that, according to Mrs Delany's description of her house, it must have been at the lower end of Thatched Court House, looking up Catherine Wheel Lane into the thoroughfare, and although she speaks of the residence as being in Catherine Wheel Lane it was really in the court. It is curious that Rhodes's plan of the parish, dated 1770, does not give Little St James's Street, but marks the turning as Catherine Wheel Lane, as if the latter had an exit into St James's Street.

We have now arrived at the bottom of St James's Street,

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[1] *Mrs Delany. A Memoir,* by George Paston.

and should properly, I suppose, end here, but Cleveland Row seems so part and parcel with the thoroughfare that I must spare a few words for it.

CLEVELAND ROW

Cleveland Row faces St James's Palace and forms a western continuation of Pall Mall as far as Cleveland Square and Bridgewater House. Its interesting inhabitants in the past include, in 1695, the Countess of Thanet, and the Earl of Bridgewater,[1] who are given in the Rate Books as "over against St James's stables"; and Mason, the poet, who, after his marriage in 1767, came to lodge with his wife here. The approximate position of his residence is indicated from the following passage in one of his letters to Gray (2nd February 1767):—"We have changed our lodgings, and are to be found at Mr Mennis's, a tailor, at the Golden Ball in Cleveland Row, the last door but one nearest the Green Park Wall." Later, in 1772, Lord Rodney occupied one of the houses, and Wraxall relates how he "passed much time with him here, down to the very moment of his departure for the West Indies in 1779. In the List of Persons who paid Tax on Male Servants in 1780, I find Mrs Susanna Bracken given as living in Cleveland Row; while five years later the Rate Books record the following residents here:—the Hon. George Selwyn, John Fenton, Lord Berwick and the Hon. Keith Stuart; the Duke of Bridgewater is also given as living in Cleveland Row.

The house in which Selwyn died, on 25th January 1791, was formerly the residence of his mother, and in it occurred the famous quarrel between Walpole and Townshend, which Gay parodied with such success in his *Beggar's Opera.*[2]

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[1] It is curious that Lord Bridgewater should have lived near the spot where later the Duke of Bridgewater had his residence.

[2] Wraxall's *Memoirs.*

A house adjoining is interesting for another reason. "In May 1761," writes Sir Edward Hertslet, "the Earl of Bute removed his office (The Foreign Office)—the Northern Department—from the Cockpit at Whitehall to a house in Cleveland Road, and it had previously belonged to Baron Behr."

Various letters are given by Sir Edward referring to the residence, one of which records the addition (in 1771) of a smaller house adjoining to the office; and yet another notifying the removal of the Foreign Office from Cleveland Row in 1786.[1] The premises had been rented from Sir George Warren.

Later residents in Cleveland Row were Henry Flood, the orator, who was living here while a member of the English Parliament in 1784; Sir Sydney Smith, in 1809, and Theodore Hook, who rented, from 1827-1831, the large house (No. 5) occupied by Smith, and belonging to Lord Lowther, at £100 a year, and characteristically borrowed a large sum to furnish it.

Leading out of Cleveland Row were two tributary streets, one being known as Russell Court—whose only notable inhabitant appears to have been Sir Gilbert Affleck, who was living here in 1796[2]—and the other as Cleveland Court. Both this and the row take their name, of course, from Cleveland House, which formerly stood here.

In the court Charles Jervas, the painter, died on 2nd November 1739. Pope used at one time to take lessons from Jervas here, and references in the poet's letters attest this, and also the fact that on several occasions Pope actually stayed in the house.

Although George Selwyn is given, as we have seen, in the Rate Books as living in Cleveland Row, his residence is also stated to have been in Cleveland Court.[1] It is therefore possible that it was at the corner of the two, a situation likely to confuse the very inadequate methods of rate-collectors in those days. It seems certain that it was in the court, at any rate, that Selwyn's friend, Gilly Williams, died on 25th November 1805.

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[1] See *Recollections of the Foreign Office.*

[2] St George's Rate Books.

One other reference to Cleveland Court is contained in Mrs Delany's *Autobiography*, for that lady, writing to Miss Dewes, on 15th August 1768, remarks: "At our return we [the Duchess of Portland was her companion] went to my Lord Carlisle's in Cleveland Court (nobody in Town), to see the King of Denmark, who is in Lord Bathe's old house at St James's and opposite to Lord Carlisle's. (I should have said Sir W. Musgrave's.) His Majesty was dressing, and the blinds down all but a little peep; the Duchess had the satisfaction of a glimpse of him, and I of his *valet de chambre.*"

As I have said, Cleveland House and its grounds occupied the site of the row and court of that name. The mansion was originally known as Berkshire House; and had been erected by Thomas Howard, Earl of Berkshire, in the reign of Charles I. Here it was that Lord Clarendon lived after he had left Worcester House and before Clarendon House in Piccadilly was ready for him. Here he was visited by Evelyn and Pepys, and here, at a Council, Samuel records that "my Lord Chancellor was sleeping and snoring the greater part of the time." Other tenants of the place included the French Ambassador, in 1664-1665. Adjoining the house was another, which belonged partly to Sir William Pulteney, as is shown by a warrant, dated 24th September 1670, "to pay Sir William

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[1] This seems proved by an entry in Romney's engagement-book, which reads "Maria Fagniani, Cleveland Court"—Maria Fagniani being, of course, the adopted daughter (or actual daughter) of George Selwyn, later Marchioness of Hertford.

Pulteney £400 for his interest in a house adjoining Berkshire House."

In 1668 the property was purchased by Charles II. for Lady Castlemaine, who, two years later, was created Duchess of Cleveland and who then gave her new name to the residence.

In course of time she sold a portion of the grounds towards St James's Street, and several houses were erected on it, in one of which the Earl of Nottingham resided, presumably after he had sold Nottingham House, Kensington, to William III. in 1691. On the death of the Duchess of Cleveland in 1709, Cleveland House passed to her son, Charles Fitzroy, Duke of Cleveland, whose son married one of Lord Nottingham's daughters, and who continued to live here till his death in 1730. The house was later purchased by the 1st Duke of Bridgewater, whose son, the 3rd Duke, considerably enlarged it. Eventually the property passed to the 1st Earl of Ellesmere who, in 1849, built the present Bridgewater House, from the designs of Sir Charles Barry. Originally Berkshire or Cleveland House and its grounds extended from the Park to the corner of St James's Street.[1]

The western portion of Cleveland Row is now known as Cleveland Square, surely the strangest of the many strange squares in London. We know what it looks like to-day: its north side filled up by Bridgewater House, Mr Rochfort-Maguire's island-residence facing it, and behind that the row of small houses ending on their east side in the once flower-bedecked house of the late Lord Armistead, the life-long friend of Mr Gladstone. What the place looked like two hundred years ago can be judged by a glance at Kip's map, dated 1710-1720.

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[1] Bridgewater House is another of the mansions dealt with in *The Private Palaces of London*, where an account of its pictorial treasures will be found.

It is difficult nowadays to differentiate between Cleveland Square and Cleveland Row, because in earlier times the latter ran right through to the Park on both sides of the way—excepting where Cleveland House broke its north line—and the houses of the earlier "Row," at their west end, became later the residences in the square. In addition to those people I have already noted as living here may be mentioned Lord George Gordon in 1785; Thomas Grenville, the great book-collector, at No. 15, from 1796 to 1801; Sir Gilbert Blane, a once well-known physician, at No. 4, from 1800 to 1802; and Lord Castlereagh, who occupied, in 1803, No. 3, a house later tenanted by Viscount Sydney.

V

THE CLUBS

THERE are ten important clubs, as well as a few lesser ones, in St James's Street to-day. Of the larger ones two are on the east and eight on the west side. In the order of their establishment they are as follows:—White's (1697), The Cocoa Tree (1746), Boodle's (1762), Brooks's (1764), Arthur's (1765), The Conservative (1840), The New University (1863), The Thatched House (1865), The Devonshire (1875) and The Royal Societies (1894). Most of them are what is termed "social," and only three can be regarded as political—even in the wide extension which that term has come to assume—Brooks's, The Conservative and The Devonshire.

Both Pall Mall and Piccadilly have more clubs than St James's Street, but none of them dates its formation back further than the early years of the nineteenth century, and therefore in this region, which is known as Clubland, St James's Street takes priority in age and, in the case of certain clubs, in importance and historic and social interest.

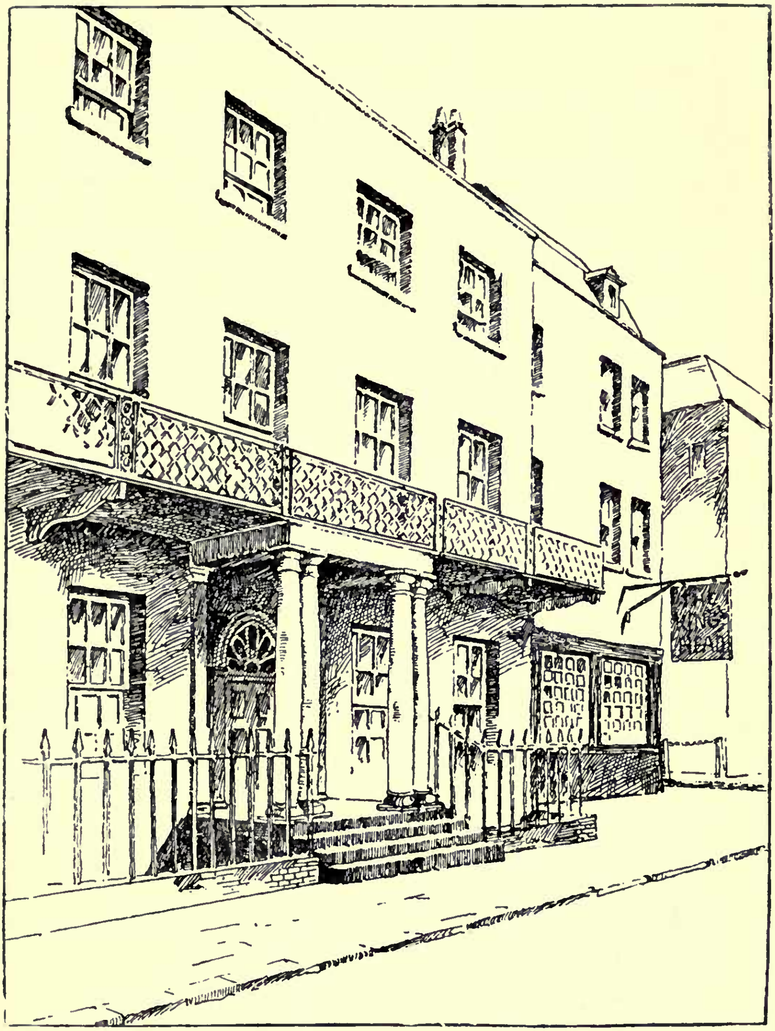
The genesis of some of the earlier established clubs was in the cocoa-houses which sprang up in London in the middle of the eighteenth century.

The proprietor of a cocoa-house seems to have awaited the psychological moment when his clientèle was of such a character as to be more or less permanent and to have become personally acquainted with each other. Then he would sound the influential and find that they were prepared to subscribe certain amounts on the understanding that strangers were no longer admitted—in a word, he acquired the necessary powers to run his establishment under rules which automatically converted what had been a public house of call into a private society's headquarters. Both White's and The Cocoa Tree are examples of this metamorphosis, and as such have a double history: their records as cocoa-houses and their more varied annals as clubs.

WHITE'S

"White's" Club is something more than a club; it is an institution. For over two hundred years it has been so intimately associated with the political history of the country as almost to take its place in its annals by the side of Brooks's. Its records have been preserved from a very early date, and their publication (1892), by the Hon. Algernon Bourke, in two large quarto volumes, will have enlightened those interested in the club and political life of two centuries, concerning all data on which they may require information. Besides this the few other works which deal generally with the clubs of London have, of course, repeated as fully as possible the historic details which cling with such full growth round White's. For this reason it is not necessary here to recapitulate as amply as would otherwise have been incumbent on me the annals of the club. I am, indeed, gleaning in a field that has been already carefully searched, and I must therefore fall back on the full sheaves of earlier workers, perhaps being able here and there to add a wisp to the already well-garnered store.

White's Club grew out of White's Chocolate House. In its earlier form it was first opened by one Francis White, in 1693, at a house on the east side of St James's Street, its site being to-day occupied by Boodle's Club. Four



OLD WHITE'S CLUB

years later (1697), White, requiring more commodious premises, found them on the opposite side of the street. The house he took was three doors south of St James's Place, and its exact position is the northern portion of the present Arthur's club-house. Here White continued till 1702, when he took in the adjoining house on the south side of his premises. At this time John Arthur's name appears in the Rate Books as White's next-door neighbour on the *north* side, and, as Mr Bourke remarks, "the name is an important one in tracing the subsequent history of the club, Arthur being at this time White's servant and assistant-manager." It will be found that members of White's (Lord March, for instance) sometimes date from "Arthur's," which was only another name for White's, and had nothing to do with the present Arthur's Club.

White carried on his Chocolate House with success till 1711, in the February of which year he died, and was buried in St James's, Piccadilly. From certain evidence in his will, it has been conjectured that he may have been of Italian extraction, and his name merely an anglicised form of Bianchi or Bianco.

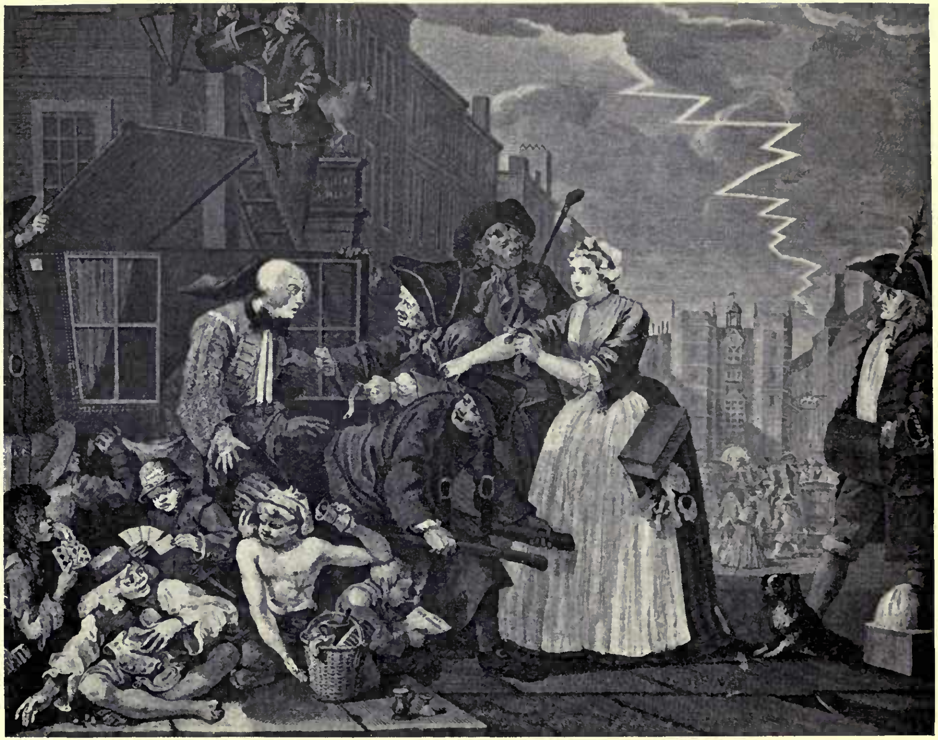
His widow succeeded to the business and continued to direct it; its fashionable character being well maintained. In those days it was from White's that tickets for masquerades (Mr Cornely's in Soho Square and others) and even for the opera (then under Heidegger) were issued.

In the Rate Books, Elizabeth White is first set down as Widow White, then as Mrs White, and finally as Madame White, distinctions denoting gradually improved standing. She continued the management till some time between 1725 and 1729, after which year her name disappears. In 1730 John Arthur is entered as tenant. He, no doubt, had been previously associated with Mrs White in the business and, at her death or retirement, made arrangements to conduct it on his own account.

Two years later (1732) he added to the premises the house he had formerly occupied, so that by this time the chocolate-house embraced three tenements—the second, third and fourth houses below St James's Place. In the April of the following year occurred the fire which burned the place to the ground. *The Daily Courant* for the 30th of the month thus refers to the circumstance:

"On Saturday morning, about four o'clock, a fire broke out at Mr Arthur's, at White's Chocolate House in St James's Street, which burnt with great violence, and in a short time entirely consumed that house with two others, and much damaged several others adjoining. Young Mr Arthur's wife leaped out of a window two pair of stairs upon a feather bed without much hurt. A fine collection of paintings belonging to Sir Andrew Fountaine, valued at £3000 at least, was entirely destroyed. His Majesty and the Prince of Wales were present about an hour, and encouraged the firemen and people to work at the engines, a guard being ordered from St James's to keep off the populace. His Majesty ordered twenty guineas among the firemen and others that worked the engines, and five guineas to the guard; and the Prince ordered the firemen ten guineas."

Apart from the notices of the event in the daily Press, the fire at White's has been perpetuated in pictorial art, for in *The Rake's Progress* Hogarth introduced the incident. In Plate 4 of the series it is indicated by the forked lightning striking the house from which hangs a sign with the word "White's" on it. This allusion, however, only occurs in the final state of the plate, which was greatly altered during the progress of engraving. It will be observed that this house is not the burnt-down White's, but Gaunt's coffee-house, to which the chocolate-house was temporarily



ST. JAMES'S STREET, FROM HOGARTH'S RAKE'S PROGRESS

removed. From this it has been conjectured that Hogarth had begun the plate before the fire, and that on its occurrence he took the opportunity of recording the event, and also of putting in the group of gambling boys (as a satiric touch in allusion to the play that had already become notorious at White's), a group not included in the original picture.[1] In Plate 6 of the same series another allusion is made to the fire, by the introduction of flames bursting from the wainscot, to which the gamblers, intent on their play, pay no heed.

On 3rd May, Arthur inserted an advertisement in *The Daily Post* to the effect that he had "removed to Gaunt's Coffee House, next the St James's Coffee House in St James's Street," and begging for the patronage there of his former supporters.

The rebuilding of White's does not appear to have been completed till 1736, in which year Robert Arthur ("the young Mr Arthur"; John, his father, having by this time died or retired) appears in the Rate Books as proprietor of the newly erected premises, which occupied the sites of the three houses already mentioned as having been gradually acquired.

White's Club had already been formed, but owing to the fire all records of its institution are wanting. It has been conjectured that the date of its inception coincided with the removal of the Chocolate House to the west side of the street in 1697; but nothing is definitely known, and although in 1736 Arthur drew up a set of fresh rules, probably from memory, he omitted, or was unable, to set down the exact date, or to reconstruct a list of the original members. In any case it seems fairly obvious that the Old Club was started in White's time; the Young Club not coming into existence till 1743.

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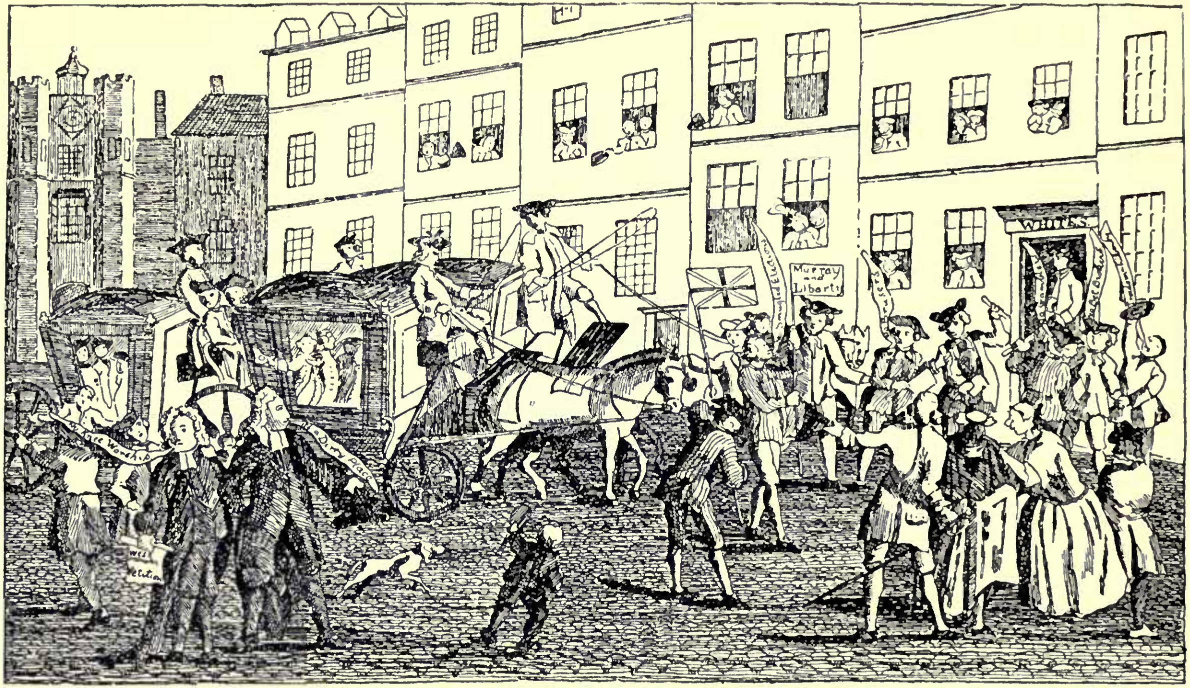
[1] As the engraving reversed the picture, the generality of the plates show White's on the wrong (east) side of the street. It is curious, however, that in the engraving copied from the oil painting (which, by the by, is in the Soane Museum), the word "White's" on the sign is left reversed; that in looking at it, it reads backwards. This is so in the excellent reproduction given in the *History of White's*, and is a point not before noticed, I think.

The rules number ten. No one was to be admitted except by ballot; one black ball excluded; each member was to pay "a guinea a year towards having a good cook"; no one was to be admitted to dinner or supper unless he was a member; supper was to be served at ten o'clock, and the bill brought at twelve, and no one was to be balloted for "but during the sitting of Parliament"; this last rule apparently introduced the political character which attached to the club in after days, although at this time it was essentially non-party, and admitted men of all shades of opinion so long as their loyalty to the Throne was unquestioned.

The line was drawn, naturally, at Jacobites, although one or two of the earlier members might have been supposed to labour under some suspicion in this respect. The number of members in 1736 (when the existing records begin) was eighty-two.

In the meantime the Chocolate House continued to flourish under Robert Arthur's management, and it seems to have been from its regular customers that the old Club was largely reinforced. "The first step towards becoming a member of the Old Club," writes Mr Bourke, "would be to be constantly in evidence at the Chocolate House, and among Arthur's customers were many men of good birth and social standing, anxious for election into the exclusive circle of the Old Club, but who found themselves debarred by that very exclusiveness for more years than they could afford to wait." This circumstance led to the formation of what was called the Young Club—a kind of waiting-room or probationary stage to the older institution. This new departure was based on its prototype: its rules


WHITES
Murray and Liberty

"THE BRITISH PATRIOTS' PROCESSION"
Shewing White's Club House on west side of street

were practically the same; its subscription was the same. That it was no easy matter to pass from one to the other is proved by the fact that so well known and popular a man as Selwyn took eight years to compass it, and that his friend Lord March (the "old Q" of later days) never got in at all, being rejected as a "foreigner," probably in allusion, as Mr Bourke suggests, to his prolonged stays in France.

It was not till 1781 that the two sections of the Club were amalgamated and henceforth the allusions to the "Old" and "New" Club, which are so frequent in the letters of the period,[1] cease and "White's" takes their place. The correspondence of Horace Walpole is, as most of us know, full of references to White's, its members, its rules, manners and customs, its social and political activity, and anecdotes and bon-mots connected with it and its *habitué.*

In 1755 [2] both clubs moved from the west to the east side of the thoroughfare, and took up their quarters in the "Great House of St James's Street," with which the fortunes of White's have ever since been identified.[3]

This house (No. 37) had previously belonged to Sir Whistler Webster, and from him Arthur purchased the freehold. The place had already interesting associations. Here lived that Countess of Northumberland noted for the almost regal state she kept up, and of whom Walpole has recorded some interesting data. Henry, 2nd Duke of Beaufort was the tenant of the house in the early years of the eighteenth century, and after him the Duchess of Newcastle came to live there in 1716. Sir William Windham succeeded her, and was in turn followed (in 1721) by Sir Thomas Webster who, according to the Rate Books, appears to have owned the property. To it Sir Whistler Webster, his son, succeeded, and from him, as I have stated, it passed to Arthur.

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[1] See particularly the Selwyn correspondence.

[2] In 1750 Erasmus Mumford had published a "Letter to the Club at White's, in which are set forth the great Expediency of Repealing the Laws now in Force against Excessive Gambling, etc."

[3] At this time the inclusive membership was three hundred and fifty.

Having seen the club safely ensconced in its new home, Robert Arthur made over the management to Robert Mackreth, his whilom assistant, and subsequently his son-in-law. When Arthur died, in his house in St James's Place, in 1761, it was found that he had left his considerable property, including White's club-house and other belongings in the neighbourhood, to his daughter, Mary, and thus it passed into Mackreth's hands. "Bob," as he was familiarly called, did not continue the management long, for in 1763 we find him sending the following letter (possibly a circular one) to Selwyn with regard to the change:—

WHITE'S,
April 5, 1763.

SIR,

Having quitted business entirely, and let my house to the Cherubim, who is my near relation, I humbly beg leave, after returning you my most grateful thanks for all favours, to recommend him to your patronage, not doubting, by the long experience I have had of his fidelity, that he will strenuously endeavour to oblige.

I am, Sir,
Your most dutiful and much obliged
humble servant, R. MACKRETH.

Who this mysterious "Cherubim" was has not been traced. Evidently, however, he had been an assistant of Mackreth, and was well known to the members. It has been affirmed that his name was Chambers, but why such an angelic name was given him, unless for some such reason as it was applied to the 10th Hussars,[1] is not clear.

Seven years after his taking over the management we find the name of John Martindale as "The master of the house." He appears to have been a scion of a family which was, to use Mr Bourke's phrase, "engaged in ministering to the amusement of the upper classes in one way or another." One of its members was a saddler in St James's Street, and made much money by his stud horse, Regulus; another, Henry, kept a gaming-house, and was on one occasion fined, in company with the play-loving Lady Buckinghamshire and others, for so doing. John Martindale inaugurated his reign by whipping up subscriptions, many of which were as much as five years in arrears. As a consequence, certain resignations took place, the Duke of Rutland, Lord Chesterfield, Lord Holland and Lord Berkeley being among the seceders. Subscriptions to the Old Club were raised; committees were formed to inquire into the working of the institution; and, in short, a period of unrest set in. The fusion of the Old and New Clubs in 1781 may be regarded as putting the crowning touch to Martindale's schemes for improvement; it certainly inaugurated a new era in the club's economic history. Its more public character may be said to have undergone a no less marked change two years later, when Pitt was elected a member, and White's passed for a time into a political centre of activity. This circumstance had a far-reaching effect; it caused the secession of Fox and his friends, who henceforth set up their standard, both of play and politics, at Brooks's, and thus led to the rivalry which existed for so many years between the two clubs. Many of the protagonists, such as Pitt himself and the Prince of Wales, were actually members of both, but they henceforth identified themselves (if Pitt can be said ever to have gone so far as this) with one or other of the rival houses. Gillray's famous caricature, entitled *Promised Horrors of the French Invasion*, dated 1796, shows the position taken up by Brooks and White and their members in the suppositititious event. The partisans at the former are making good use of a guillotine placed on its balcony; from the balcony of the latter the bodies of illustrious members are hurled into the street, where Fox belabours Pitt at a whipping-post, and St James's Palace is burning furiously. A year after this Pitt's committee met at White's, and for the first time a standing committee of the club was elected.

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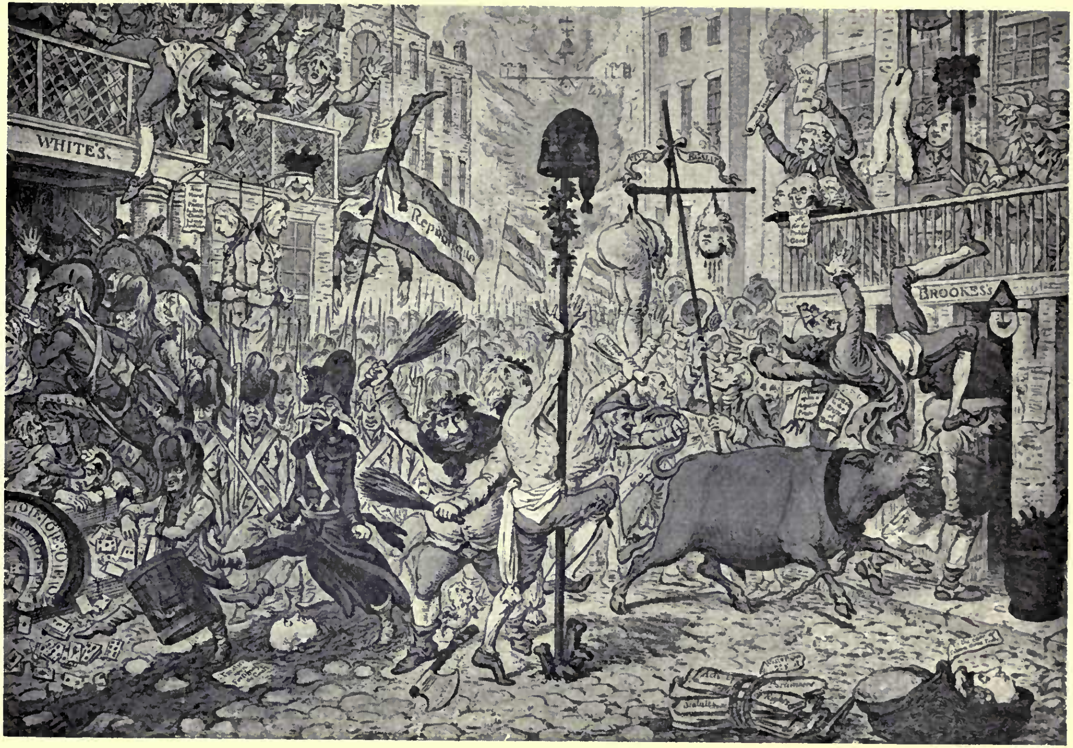
[1] The wearing of trousers of a cherry colour by this regiment is said to have given rise to this atrocious pun.

There is no necessity to recapitulate the various political events connected with White's during this period, for they largely enter into the history of the country, where allusions to them will be found. The more domestic side of the club's annals here chiefly concern us. The first landmark in these occurs in 1812, in which year Martindale gave up the management and was succeeded in it by George Raggett. The new proprietor had already had experience in the management of clubs, and he carried on his new venture with energy and astuteness. His waiting up till play was over, sweeping the floors for stray counters (often representing considerable amounts), and thus securing himself a decent income, is a fact recorded in one of his own statements. Under him the famous Bow Window became a feature of the club—the shrine of Brummell and his set; the terror of the debutantes passing down St James's Street to the Palace; the *œil de bœuf*, so to term it, of fashion and gossip. Mr Bourke, referring to it, says: "The leaders of the inner circle of the club were its occupants, and to them it was tacitly relinquished by the rest. From members still living we learn that, within their memory, an ordinary frequenter of White's would as soon have thought of taking his seat on the throne


WHITE'S
République
BROOKES'S

ST. JAMES'S STREET
After a caricature by Gillray

in the House of Lords as of appropriating one of the chairs in the bow window." It was the spot where questions of etiquette were settled; where reputations were made or marred; where the social life of London was placed under the microscope and studied; where characters were laid on the operating-table and dissected. Like Almack's, it became a tribunal as redoubtable as was ever erected under the Venetian Republic or the Inquisition of Spain.

A few more dates bring us to our own times. In 1813 the first Candidates' Book was opened; six years later Mackreth (become Sir Robert) died, and with him, to some extent, died the older traditions of the club. In 1833 excessive blackballing, which threatened to dislocate the institution altogether, led to a committee being appointed to take over the election of members for a period of one year. Under Raggett the club's fortunes continued, after this event, to be prosperous. In 1843 he made his son Henry manager, and on his death in the following year Henry Raggett was duly confirmed in the position. Six years later Raggett found it necessary to suggest a change in the management—apparently owing to the large amount of credit he was, following earlier custom, called upon to find—but matters having been adjusted in this respect by the committee, he continued in his post till his death in 1859, when there came to a close that system of management which carried with it the proprietorship of the club premises. The property now passed to Raggett's sisters, who, searching for a manager, found one in Mr Perceval, and in June 1859 that gentleman took up his duties at White's. It was under his régime that the great smoke question arose. Full details are given in *The History of White's* of this momentous event—really momentous, because it ranged the members into separate camps, and was the initial cause of the formation, under the ægis of the late King Edward, of the Marlborough Club, which undoubtedly drew from White's many who would have added to its lustre and advantage. The struggle lasted from 1859 to 1866, and ended in the discomfiture of the "new school." In 1868 a proposal was made to purchase the club premises from the Misses Raggett, but as the estate was in Chancery the scheme came to nothing. In 1870, however, circumstances had altered, and the owners were prepared to accept £60,000 for the freehold, but such a sum was not acceptable to the club.[1]

In 1876 the membership of White's, which had been previously increased at various times, was raised to six hundred, and five years later Mr Perceval obtained from Mr Eaton a lease of thirty years, at £3000. In the following year Perceval died, to be succeeded for six years by his son who carried on the premises on behalf of his mother. His management was not a marked success, and during this time the membership showed a great falling off.

In July 1888, on the management of Perceval coming to an end, that post was taken up by the Hon. Algernon Bourke. With him drastic changes, both in the constitution and the premises of the club, took place. The building was reconstructed, with great advantage both to the ground and first floor. A lounge was created, the existing small billiard-room and other rooms were knocked into one, forming a large billiard-room, and other improvements were made.

The result of the innovations, both in the constitution and building of White's,[2] has resulted in its once again occupying that unique position which it held during the palmy days of the last two centuries.

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[1] Perceval held an unexpired lease of ten years, at a rental of £2100. In 1871 the property was offered by auction, and was purchased by Mr Eaton, M.P. (afterwards Lord Cheylesmore), for £46,000, and he refused to sell, although he offered to lease the club to the committee for twenty years at a rental of £3000.

[2] Its membership is now seven hundred and fifty.

What the present club-house looked like in its earlier form may be seen from a view which shows its appearance till the year 1811, when many changes, including the introduction of the "Bow Window," were made. In 1850 the façade was entirely remodelled after designs by Mr Lockyer, the bas-reliefs which ornament it being the work of George Scharf, and the old balcony replaced by the present more elaborate ironwork.[1] At this time much interior decoration was also carried out.

Having thus briefly outlined the history of "White's," I pass for a moment to the references to it which will be found in contemporary literature. In Farquhar's *Beaux's Stratagem* (1707) it is referred to, and in Gay's *Trivia* the observant author notes that:

> "At White's the harnessed chairman idly stands,
> And swings around his waist his tingling hands."

In *The Tatler's* initial number, which appeared in 1709, it is stated that "all accounts of gallantry, pleasure and entertainment shall be under the article of White's Chocolate House," and several of the papers bear the superscription of "White's." Addison, in his Prologue to Steele's *Tender Husband*, introduces the place thus:

> "To all his most frequented haunts resort,
> Oft dog him to the Ring, and oft to Court;
> As love of pleasure, or of place invites:
> And sometimes catch him taking snuff at White's."

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[1] M. Boutet de Monvel is not correct when he says that "on y voit toujours le balcon fameux où tour à tour vinrent s'accouder Wellington, Brummell, et les dandies." By the by, he quotes Sir William Fraser, who records (in his *Napoleon III.*) Disraeli as saying that to obtain the Garter and to be elected at White's were the two supreme human distinctions.

George Brummell et George IV.

Pope has several references to White's, both in *The Dunciad* and *The Moral Essays.* In the former, satirising Colley Cibber, one of the members, he writes:

> "Or chain'd at White's among the Doctors sit,
> Teach oaths to gamesters, and to nobles wit."

And also:

> "Familiar White's God save, King Colley cries,
> God save King Colley, Drury Lane replies."

There is no doubt that Cibber's membership rather rankled in the breasts of less fortunate authors, and Pope was not a man to let slip an opportunity of laughing at what was regarded as a certain pretentiousness. In *The Moral Essays* it is the high play at the club that rouses the poet's ire and points his pen with the venom which ran to its tip so easily. Speaking of *The Dunciad* reminds me that one of those who fell under Pope's lash was Oldmixon, and Oldmixon is one of the writers who mentions "White's," for he tells in his *Life of Arthur Maynwaring* how they retired to the little garden behind the house, in 1710, to discuss the question of the authorship of *The Examiner.*

In the correspondence of the period—that of Swift and Walpole, Selwyn and his friends—the allusions to White's are so numerous that a chapter might easily be filled with extracts. The diaries of the time are hardly less productive. Most of these contain information about gaming losses, references to that remarkable betting-book which Mr Bourke has reprinted in his second volume of the club's annals, and criticisms on the ways (often wonderful and fearful) of the members.

> "Had I whole counties, I to White's would go,
> And set land, woods, and rivers at a throw,"

exclaims Bramston's *Man of Taste,* and this might well be taken as the motto of a chapter on gambling at the club. The hazard table was as crowded there as it was at Brooks's; men lost and won fortunes at a sitting; many of the most interesting letters in the Selwyn papers are sad records of the vast losses incurred by young Lord Carlisle in what he termed "the temple of Content."[1] From the days of Fox and the politicians to that of Brummell and the dandies was one long sequence of high play and losses and gains, appalling even to our own age, accustomed to talk and think in millions. When Walpole and Selwyn and Gilly Williams, in the Gothic recesses of Strawberry Hill, composed their famous coat-of-arms for the club, the *jeu d'esprit* might well have been regarded as a serious emblem of the place—as serious as the gaming was considered by men who were not only leaders of social life, but were paramount in political circles.[2] The wagers, with which the members occupied apparently the scanty leisure snatched from the card tables, were of the most diverse and often of the most extraordinary character. The probable longevity of a famous man; the possible matrimonial alliance of a beautiful woman; the period at which a lady of fashion was likely to present her husband with an heir; the chance of one man outliving another, or of some third party surviving both; the probability of military successes, or of a well-known man subscribing to a young lady's benefit; possibilities of engagements, elopements, marriages, deaths, jostle wagers on grave political or military and naval crises; from a change in the Ministry to a change in the fashion of a frill—nothing seems to have been too important or too trivial to give the opportunity for members to try to win, or risk losing, money.

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[1] Letter to Selwyn, 24th January 1768.

[2] It is thus described: "Vert (for card table) between two parolis proper on a chevron table; (for hazard table) two rouleaus in saltire between two dice proper in a canton sable; a white ball (for election) argent. Supporters: an old knave of Clubs on the dexter, a young knave on the sinister, side, both accoutred proper. Crest: issuing out of an Earl's coronet; (Lord Darlington), an arm shaking a dice box, all proper. Motto (alluding to the crest): *Cogit amor nummi*. The arms encircled by a claret bottle ticket by way of order."

How many men gave up to hazard what was meant for mankind can be estimated by even a slight glance through the list of White's members. Anyone acquainted, even superficially, with the social and political history of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, may take it as a fact that practically all the protagonists were at one time or another members of White's. Page after page might be filled with their illustrious or notorious names. The range is tremendous—from Walpole and Bath to Pitt and Fox; from Wellington and Castlereagh to Melbourne and Palmerston; all the great political leaders —the Portlands, the Bedfords, the Devonshires—are included; Horace Walpole and his set—Selwyn and Gilly Williams, and Coventry, and "Old Q."—to Brummell and his—the Prince of Wales and Sheridan and the rest; Heidegger the impresario and Bubb Dodington the sycophant; Colley Cibber the actor and Lord Clive the great proconsul; Alvanley the wit; Brettingham the architect of other people's houses, and Addington the founder of his own; Sefton the gourmet, and Lord Chesterfield the glass of fashion; Luttrell, noted for his retorts, and Congreve, famous for his rockets. Here is but a handful, taken at random, as a sample, so to speak, of that crowd of illustrious ones whose feet have trod, and whose voices have echoed in, the rooms of White's club. There is hardly a spot in St James's Street which is not consecrated by some memory; here memory on memory is accumulated in inexhaustible profusion.

The stories and anecdotes told of the club and its members are hardly less bewildering in their number and variety. Walpole tells many of his diverting narratives as having had their origin here; Selwyn's correspondents add their quota. These tales have become hackneyed by much quotation, and to give further currency to them would be in the nature of padding. The reviewer, who would be the first to deprecate the act, would also be the first to fill his review with the anecdotes. But he must find other means of judging this work than by the exploitation of such samples, for I utterly refuse to dish them up again.

One or two circumstances connected with White's must, however, be added to the above short account of it. In the first place, it has been on various occasions connected with some notable festivities. In 1789 its members gave a great ball at The Pantheon to celebrate the recovery of George III.; and in 1814 a still more elaborate fête to the Allied Sovereigns at Burlington House, which is said to have cost just on £10,000; the bill for the dinner to the Duke of Wellington, in the club itself, at the same time, ran to nearly £2500. These are among the more memorable entertainments given by White's.

Again, although its members numbered among them so many illustrious people, there have been a few rather notable exceptions. Prince Louis Napoleon (afterwards Napoleon III.), although so intimately associated at one time with English society, was never a member; neither was Count D'Orsay, whose profile pictures of so many members find a place in Mr Bourke's book; nor was the great Lord Lytton. But the strangest omission is surely that of Disraeli, the shield and buckler of the party chiefly identified with White's, whose name does not appear in that comprehensive list, and whose strange rather mystical visage never gazed from the *Heavenly Bow.*[1]

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[1] See Luttrell's *Advice to Julia*, 1820, p. 117. In a note the fact is mentioned that the bow window had then recently been enlarged.

VI

THE CLUBS—*continued*

THE COCOA-TREE CLUB

In the reign of Queen Anne one of the many chocolate-houses which were then established in London was called The Cocoa-Tree, and was opened on the west side of St James's Street. Like most of its competitors it was political, and the side it took is illustrated by Macky's[1] remark that, "A Whig will no more go to The Cocoa-Tree or Ozinda's than a Tory will be seen at the coffee-house of St James's." On his own showing, Addison was not so restrictive in his haunts, and in No. 1 of *The Spectator*, remarks that his face was as well known at The Cocoa-Tree as it was at The Grecian or the St James's coffee-house. Whether or not The Cocoa-Tree was, as a chocolate-house, solely patronised by Tories is a question; but it is certainly the case that when it was transformed into a club it became almost, if not quite, exclusively the headquarters of the Jacobites. Its metamorphosis took place during the early half of the eighteenth century—1746 having been given as its approximate date. An anecdote recorded by Walpole in a letter to George Montagu, dated 24th June of this year, relates that "The Duke (of Cumberland) has given Brigadier Mordaunt the Pretender's coach, on condition he rode up to London in it." "That I will, sir," said he, "and drive till it stops of its own accord at The Cocoa-Tree." This further illustrates the political complexion of the club.

[1] *Journey through England*, 1724.

Among the many illustrious frequenters of The Cocoa-Tree tavern was Swift, who seems to have made it a rule to go there directly he arrived in England; at least this assumption may, I think, be drawn from the following passage in a letter addressed to him by Prior, also a regular *habitué*, in 1717:—"I have been made to believe that we may see your reverend person this summer in England. If so, I shall be glad to meet you at any place; but when you come to London do not go to The Cocoa-Tree, but come immediately to Duke Street,[1] where you shall find a bed, a book, and a candle." Two other frequenters of the tavern were Dr (afterwards Sir Richard) Garth, the physician-poet, and Nicholas Rowe, the dramatist, and an anecdote has survived concerning these two at what was a veritable wits' tavern.

Dr Garth was on one occasion sitting in the coffee-room, talking to two "persons of quality," when Rowe, who was as attentive to the great as he was inattentive to his dress, entered. Sitting down in a box opposite that occupied by the Doctor and his friends, he began to try to catch his brother poet's eye, as the saying is. Not being successful, he at length asked the waiter to desire for him the loan of Garth's snuff-box, a very handsome one, and the gift of a royal person. Taking a pinch from it he returned it, but a little later asked for it again—the object, of course, being to attract attention, and to show the others present that he was also acquainted with its owner. Garth, who knew his foible and saw through the manœuvre, took a pencil and wrote on the lid the two Greek characters ϕ and ρ—"Fie! Rowe!" The mortified poet took the hint, and soon after retired in dudgeon.

There is another well-known story connected with this club. One of the waiters, named Samuel Spring, having to write to the Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV.), began his epistle thus: "Sam, the waiter at The Cocoa-Tree, presents his compliments to the Prince of Wales, etc." The next day the Prince called at the club and said to Sam: "Sam, this may be very well between you and me, but it will not do with the Norfolks and Arundels."

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[1] Afterwards Delahay Street, Westminster.

The importance of The Cocoa-Tree as a chocolate-house is indicated by the fact that Defoe mentions it first in a list of such haunts where, in 1703, the members of the *beau monde* were wont to assemble in the morning to drink their favourite beverages and exchange the news.

After its conversion into a club it seems to have fully sustained its earlier fashionable and political reputation, and when Lord Bute came into power, in 1761, it was then generally regarded as the "Ministerial Club." One of its members was no less a person than Gibbon, and an entry in his diary for 1762 contains this allusion to the place:

"I dined at The Cocoa-Tree with Holt. We went thence to the play, and when it was over returned to The Cocoa-Tree. That respectable body, of which I have the honour of being a member, affords every evening a sight truly English—twenty or thirty perhaps of the finest men in the kingdom, in point of fashion and fortune, supping at little tables covered with a napkin, in the middle of a coffee-house, upon a bit of cold meat and a sandwich, and drinking a glass of punch. At present we are full of King's Counsellors and lords of the bed-chamber, who, having jumped into the Ministry, make a very singular medley of their old principles and languages with their modern ones."

It can well be imagined at such a time when bribery was rampant, and men were bought and sold with a venality recalling Sir Robert Walpole's famous phrase, that the clubs and coffee-houses were the centres of this kind of traffic, and that The Cocoa-Tree, from its fashionable and political character, was one of the hotbeds of this form of marketing. In the Chatham correspondence a thinly veiled allusion to it can be detected in the following passage:—"The Cocoa-Tree have thus capacitated Her Royal Highness (the Princess-Dowager of Wales) to be Regent: it is well they have not given us a king, if they have not; for many think Lord Bute is King."

After a time high play was a feature of The Cocoa-Tree, as it was of so many of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century clubs. That this was a legacy from their earlier form as coffee-houses is proved by the remark of Roger North that: "The use of coffee-houses seems much improved by a new invention called chocolate-houses, for the benefit of rooks and cullies of quality, where gaming is added to all the rest; as if the devil had erected a new university, and those were the colleges of its professors, as well as his school of discipline."

In the pages of Walpole and other contemporary writers are various references to the high play that took place at The Cocoa-Tree. The following anecdote, given in a letter from Walpole to Mann, and dated 8th February 1780, is well known, but will bear repeating:—

"Within this week there has been a cast at hazard at The Cocoa-Tree, the difference of which amounted to one hundred and fourscore thousand pounds. Mr O'Birne, an Irish gamester, had won one hundred thousand pounds of Mr Harvey of Chigwell just started into an estate by his elder brother's death. O'Birne said: 'You can never pay me.' 'I can,' said the youth, 'my estate will sell for the debt.' 'No,' said O., 'I will win ten thousand—you shall throw for the odd ninety.' They did, and Harvey won." Ten years earlier Walpole records how "Lord Stavordale, not one and twenty, lost (at The Cocoa-Tree) eleven thousand last Tuesday, but recovered it by one great hand at hazard. He swore a great oath: 'Now, if I had been *playing deep*, I might have won millions.'"

In those days Selwyn was a constant *habitué* of the club, and here he uttered not a few of those apt retorts with which he was able to confound his adversaries, and also to show that there was a shrewd and able mind beneath the insouciant manner of a man of *ton*. Another frequenter was the Duke of Norfolk, the "jockey," familiar to readers of Creevey and other contemporary diarists; and it was at The Cocoa-tree, in 1783, that he remarked that it had been his intention to commemorate the tercentenary of his dukedom by inviting to a feast all the descendants of the first duke, but that he found that nearly six thousand persons claimed that honour, and that he felt sure more existed, and so gave up his design. Here, too, it was that Dunning and Dr Brocklesby were one evening discussing the superfluities of life, when Selwyn silenced the argument by its application *ad hominem* thus: "Very true, gentlemen; I am myself an example of the justice of your remarks, for I have lived nearly all my life without wanting either a lawyer or a physician."

When, in 1803, Sheridan resisted the claims of the Prince of Wales to be nominated to a high military command it was supposed that the Prince's enmity would have been of considerable duration. Fox's astonishment may therefore well be imagined when he heard that the two were dining and "getting drunk *tête-à-tête*" at the very moment when he was writing his letter to the Heir-Apparent on the subject. The scene of the dinner was The Cocoa-Tree, as is stated by Russell in his *Memorials of Fox*.[1]

One of the club's most illustrious later members was Byron, and among the references to it in his letters I give the following as a sample of the manners and customs of a hundred years ago. Addressed to Moore and dated 9th April 1814 the letter contains this passage:

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[1] Quoted in Jesse's *George III.*, vol. iii., p. 334.

"I have also been drinking, and on one occasion, with three other friends of The Cocoa-Tree, from six till four, yea, five in the matin. We clareted and champagned till two, then supped, and finished with a kind of Regency punch, composed of Madeira, brandy and green tea, no real water being admitted therein. There was a night for you! without once quitting the table, except to ambulate home, which I did alone, and in utter contempt of a hackney coach and my own *vis*, both of which were deemed necessary for our conveyance."

The head waiter at The Cocoa-Tree was Robert Macraith (or Mackreth), who was a *persona grata* with the members and was invariably called Bob. He prospered exceedingly, and afterwards, through marriage with Arthur's only child, became, as we have seen, connected with the future of White's.

One must not forget that it was at The Cocoa-Tree that Harry Esmond cracked his bottle with Mr St John, as he told the Dowager Lady Castlewood on one occasion.[1]

The next club in point of date is:

BOODLE'S

Its well-known Adam front, the most interesting architectural object in St James's Street, is situated at No. 28. It was formed in 1762, and was originally known as the "Savoir Vivre," but later, like White's and Brooks's, took the name of its founder. The present club-house was built by John Crunden in 1765, and Robert Adam designed it. Between 1821 and 1824, however, alterations, including the addition of a reading-room, were made to the building, under the direction of John Papworth, the architect.[1]

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[1] In December 1919 a portion of The Cocoa-Tree Club, together with stables and garages abutting on Blue Ball Yard, was offered by auction.

During the early part of its existence Boodle's was notable for the elaborate nature of its entertainments, and Gibbon, who was one of its illustrious members, mentions a masquerade given by its members in 1774 which cost no less than two thousand guineas. *The Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*, published in the previous year, also contains some lines bearing on the subject, and notes how:

"... Some John his dull invention racks
To rival Boodle's dinners or Almack's."

Under its earlier name the club is also mentioned in the lampoon addressed to the Duke of Queensberry, when that old rake was supposed to be on the point of marrying Lady Henrietta Stanhope:

"Consult the equestrian bard, wise Chiron Beever,
Or Dr Heber's learned Sybil leaves,
And they, true members of the *Savoir Vivre*,
Will tell the wondrous things that love receives."

The date of the letter to which the above is appended as a footnote in Jesse's *Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, is 1780. Just ten years earlier an interesting passage in one of Mrs Harris's letters to her son, the Earl of Malmesbury, gives us another glimpse of the club, and incidentally goes to show that its name of *Savoir Vivre* was probably given it *in addition* to that of Boodle's, as we here find the club referred to so soon after its formation under the latter title.

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[1] Timbs says that Holland designed the club-house, but this is obviously incorrect. Holland may, conceivably, have been employed at some time to alter it.

"12th May 1770. A new assembly or meeting is set up at Boodle's, called Lloyd's Coffee-room; Miss Lloyd, whom you have seen with Lady Pembroke, being the sole inventor. They meet every morning, either to play cards, chat, or do whatever else they please. An ordinary is provided for as many as choose to dine, and a supper to be constantly on the table by eleven at night; after supper they play loo. . . . I think there are twenty-six subscribers, others are to be chosen by ballot; my intelligence is that the Duchess of Bedford and Lord March have been blackballed; this I cannot account for."

Boodle's was regarded as essentially the country gentleman's club at a time when that section of society wielded no little political power, and there was a saying current that "Every Sir John belongs to Boodle's, and that when a waiter comes into the room and says to some aged student of *The Morning Herald*, 'Sir John, your servant has come,' every head is mechanically thrown up in answer to the address." It would seem, too, that Shropshire is a county which has provided it with a particularly large number of its members. But it has had many who cannot boast of being Salopians—Charles James Fox and Gibbon and Wilberforce, *inter alios*. Sir Frank Standish was also a member, and has been immortalised by Gillray (who lived next door to the club-house, at No. 29) in his caricature entitled *A Standing Dish at Boodle's*.

For many years the proprietor was Mr Gaynor, an amiable, large-hearted, open-handed man, to whom not a few members were indebted for financial assistance. He always kept a large amount of cash in his safe, and at his death is said to have been owed no less than £10,000, which, however, by a clause in his will, was not to be demanded from the borrowers. Mr Gaynor used to preside personally over the election of candidates, and apparently anyone whom he approved got in, regardless of blackballs.

In a word, he seems to have ruled his society with an autocratic but withal just and discriminating sway; and when the mysterious "By order of the Managers" occasionally appeared beneath some rule on the notice-board, "the custom of the house existing from time immemorial," was implicitly bowed down to by those who would have been hard put to it to say who the managers actually were, or by what rules their powers existed. In this respect Boodle's was *sui generis*. Once, however, defection took place when, because of a determination on Mr Gaynor's part to change an old-standing custom, the late Duke of Beaufort and other influential members of the old school resigned in a body.

After Mr Gaynor's death his sister succeeded him in the proprietorship. She died in 1896, and a crisis thereupon arose in the club's history. However, by the united exertions of certain of its members it was reconstituted on more modern lines, and bids fair to have a future existence comparable with its lengthy successful career in the past. At one time hunting and turf disputes were largely settled here, but Tattersall's has taken its place in such arbitrations. But it still remains the club of M.F.H.'s, and the memory of such a prominent one as George Lane Fox is as green here as is that of the easy-going Charles James Fox [1] or the dignified Mr Gibbon.

BROOKS'S

The history of Brooks's is the political history of the country, from one point of view, during the latter half of the eighteenth century onwards, or until the essentially party clubs in Pall Mall to some extent took over the burden. A volume might be written on the club as a centre of Whiggism and Liberalism. In such a history

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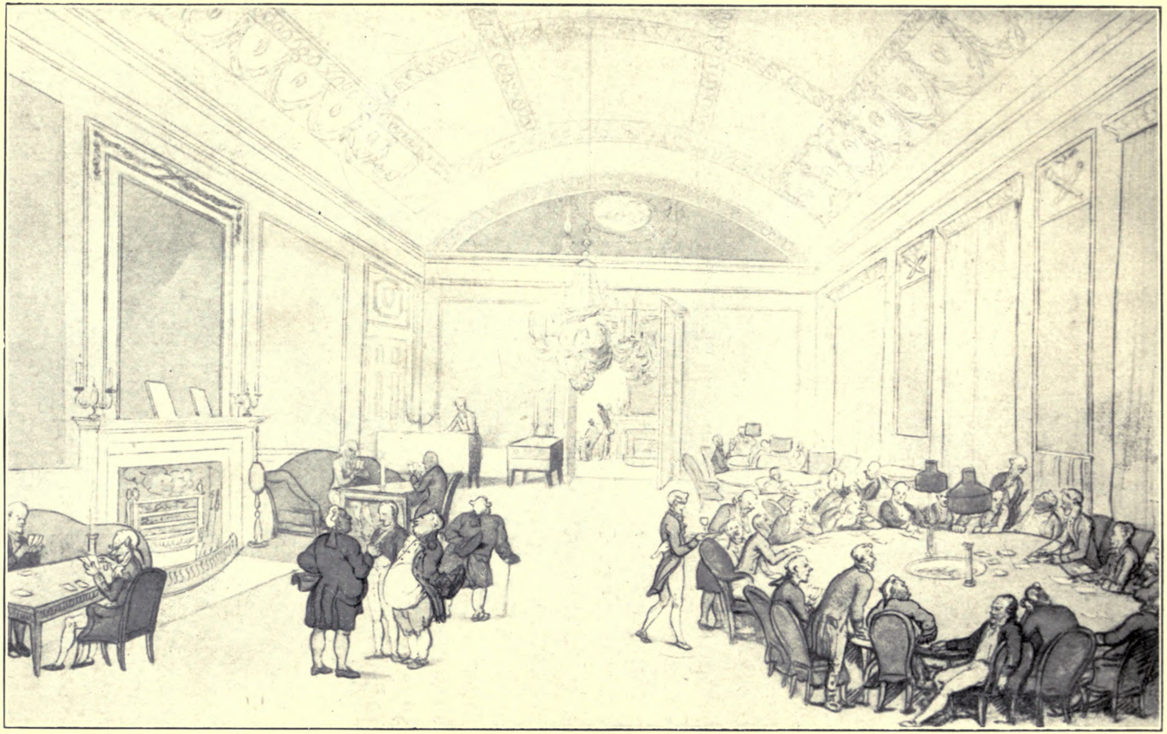
[1] There used to be a portrait of Fox here, but it has disappeared.



THE CARD ROOM AT BROOKS'S
After Rowlandson

the great names of Fox and Sheridan would stand out prominently, even among the crowd of illustrious statesmen who have belonged to Brooks's, and whose political activities have been so closely identified with the club as to place it in the position of a handmaid to one side of the House of Commons. It is because the annals of Brooks's are so interwoven with those of the country during the period indicated that it enters into the history of our land more intimately than does any other similar society. Sir George Trevelyan does not overstate the fact when he calls it "the most famous political club that will ever have existed in England"[1]; and although its origin, like that of most of the earlier clubs, was not political (as we can see by the collocation, as members, of such men as the Duke of Grafton and the Duke of Richmond, Lord Weymouth and the Duke of Portland), it speedily became the headquarters of Liberal opinion. But it must not be supposed that this made any difference to its character as a gaming place. On the contrary, the politician, jaded with parliamentary labours, came here to be equally jaded by the excitement of gambling; and it may with truth be asserted that (to take a notable instance) what Fox gave to the club by his personality and his genius he lost there in the feverish exaltations of the faro table. That great man, whose very failings were on the stupendous scale of his intellect, may be said (so to parody a well-known line) to have given to Brooks's what was meant for mankind. The story of his vast losses (his gains at hazard were as inconsiderable as they might have been great had he kept to whist or any other game where brains tell) is well known; the diaries and reminiscences of the period teem with allusions to, and full descriptions of, them. In an age of gaming he stood out prominently, just as in an age of notable men he was *facile princeps*. Had his passions been as well under control as were (to instance his greatest compeer) those of Pitt, he might have even surpassed that extraordinary man, and would assuredly have come to be regarded as the greatest political genius produced by that teeming century. As it was, he may be compared, *mutatis mutandis*, with Coleridge, for genius stultified by self-indulgence, and for almost divine gifts thrown away through a fatal lack of concentrative power.

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[1] *The Early History of Charles James Fox.*

Not less than this could here be said of the most illustrious member of the club which is known as Brooks's; but it is the history of that institution rather than that of its members with which these pages are chiefly concerned, and we must turn to that aspect of the subject.

A substantial quarto volume has been compiled, dealing with the annals of Brooks's[1]; its frontispiece is, appropriately, an admirable portrait in crayon, after William Russell, of Fox, the original of which is in the possession of the club. The bulk of the book is occupied by a *catalogue raisonnée* (so to term it) of its members from the foundation till the year 1900. Some full and valuable appendices give further information with regard to the more notable members, in a racy way, which will well repay perusal. These appendices range from a short account of the great ball commemorating the recovery of George III. in 1789, to Lord Granville's famous "appeal" in 1887, when political discord, consequent on Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, threatened to endanger even the sacred existence of Brooks's. Prefixed to the list of members is an Introduction, in which are incorporated such data as go to make up the history of the club. From this and other sources I have liberally helped myself.

We must go beyond St James's Street for the origin of Brooks's, for in 1764 a club, kept by Macall (whose anagram Almack is better known), and founded by twenty-seven noblemen and gentlemen, was established in Pall Mall, on the site of what was later the British Institution. Among its rules were the following:—that (No. 21) no gaming should take place in the eating-room, except tossing up for reckonings, on penalty of paying the whole bill of the members present; that (No. 22) dinner should be served exactly at half-past four; that (No. 26) Almack was not to be permitted to sell any wine in bottles approved of by members out of the house[1]; that (No. 30) any member becoming a candidate for any other club (White's only excepted) should have his name struck off the books of Brooks's. And there were other rules which seem speedily to have been disregarded; for instance, that members gambling should have certain stated sums in cash by them for that purpose. As a matter of fact, credit soon became the order of the day, and when Brooks took over the management his resources were frequently called upon to supply members with ready money. Some idea of the extent of the play here may be gained from the following note against the name of Mr Thynne in the club books:—"Mr Thynne, having won only 12,000 guineas during the last two months, retired in disgust, 21st March 1772." This was evidently written by one of his victims, who has added: "And that he may never return is the ardent wish of members."

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[1] *Memorials of Brooks's*, 1907.

During its earlier days the club was known as Almack's,[2] and soon became notable for its high play, many references to which are scattered through the letters of Walpole and those who kept up such a frequent correspondence with Selwyn. Apparently the first extant reference to the club occurs in a letter from Lord March to Selwyn, dated July

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[1] Almack was a wine merchant, which accounts for this rule.

[2] Almack, in the year following the establishment of the club, opened his better remembered Assembly Rooms in King Street, which had such a long and prosperous career.

1765, wherein the writer, sympathising with Selwyn over some monetary losses, remarks: "Almack's or White's will bring all back again."

When exactly Brooks took over the management of the club is not quite certain, but his name first appears in a letter from Storer to Selwyn, dated 6th August 1774. Notwithstanding this, however, the name of Almack seems to have still been used till 1778, in which year the club was moved to No. 60 St James's Street, and took up its quarters in the house built, at Brooks's expense, from designs by Henry Holland, the architect. Here it was opened in October 1778, and Thomas Townshend (afterwards Viscount Sydney), writing to Selwyn in that month, remarks: "As a proof of our increasing opulence, I need only show the Opera House . . . and Brooks's new house, fitted up with great magnificence, which is to be opened in a week or ten days."

Apparently the play there was so fast and furious that it threatened to break up the club. Hare, writing to Selwyn on 8th May 1779, says: "We are all beggars at Brooks's, and he threatens to leave the house, as it yields him no profit," which gives point to Tickell's lines:

"... liberal Brookes, whose speculative skill
Is hasty credit and a distant bill;
Who, nursed in clubs, disdains a vulgar trade,
Exults to trust, and blushes to be paid."

A man with such a temperament, and more sober records confirm poetical exaggeration, must, indeed, have found it difficult to run an expensive club under these conditions—conditions proved over and over again by the correspondence of the period, when nearly every high-born letter-writer complains of his impecuniosity owing to gambling, or has some similar tale to tell of his friends. Brooks's threat to resign in 1779 was not an idle one, for after eight years of management he did give it up, and died in poverty in 1782, leaving a name as well known as any in the social and political annals of the eighteenth century. There was a tradition, based on his impoverished circumstances, but on nothing else, that in order to evade the rapacity of his creditors his body was buried in a small vault beneath the pavement of St James's Street, close to the club of which he had for a time been the "patron."

The drawing which Rowlandson made of the card-room at Brooks's (now in the club's possession), and the illustration of it by R. Cruikshank in *The English Spy*, give a good idea of a scene that was so familiar to most of the fashionable gamesters of the period. But it was not only at the faro table or at any of the card games played then that members of Brooks's lost their money. The memorial of another form of gambling is extant in the *Betting Book*, a volume on which Sir George Trevelyan has written eloquently, and which forms a companion to the similar record kept among the archives of "White's." The bets are of all kinds, for all sorts of sums, and on every conceivable subject. "Fifty guineas that Thurlow gets a Fellowship of the Exchequer for his son; fifty guineas that Mademoiselle Heinel does not dance at the Opera House next winter; fifty guineas that two thousand people were at the Pantheon last evening; fifty guineas that Lord Ilchester gives his first vote in Opposition, and hits eight out of his first ten pheasants; five guineas down, to receive a hundred if the Duke of Queensberry dies before half-an-hour after five in the afternoon of the twenty-seventh of June 1773."[1] Such are some of the wagers which are to be found, together with others less easily transcribable, in the betting book of Brooks's.

After the death of Brooks, one Griffin succeeded as manager. His name remains till 1815, although some twelve years after his advent, notably in 1795, a kind of supervisory board was formed, the first members so elected being the Earl of Upper Ossory, Lord Romney, Lord Robert Spencer, Sir Thomas Miller, and Mr Crawle. The acting manager or "master" of the club seems to have henceforth worked in conjunction with this board of control, which was changed yearly, each retiring member naming a successor. After 1795 we find the management denominated as "Griffin & Co." At some time subsequent to 1815 one Wheelwright succeeded to Griffin's place. Wheelwright took Halse into partnership in 1824, and retired seven years later. Halse was then joined by Henry Banderet. When the former retired in 1846 he received £500 from the club for his interest in the unexpired lease of the house, and fifty guineas for the surrender of his lodging there. Banderet remained on, and it is said that the well-known remark that being in the club was "like dining in a Duke's house with the Duke lying dead upstairs" was largely due to his having established in Brooks's that air of solemn yet comfortable refinement which distinguishes it. It is related of Banderet that during the thirty-four years of his connection with the club he had never been absent except on one occasion, when he was induced to start on a holiday, but found himself so miserable away from the place that he was back there long before the day was over. At his death the management was undertaken by a committee of the club and has ever since been so carried on.[1]

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[1] *Early History of Fox.*

Of the actual club-house, I have already mentioned the erection and a contemporary reference to its internal magnificence, as a result of which it was found necessary to double the subscription. In 1804 the club was within an ace of leaving St James's Street. It appears that one of the waiters, George Hedder, with a view to being taken into partnership by Griffin, purchased the lease of the building and refused to give it up "for any pecuniary consideration whatever, but solely on his being admitted into a share of the house." So effectively did he appear to wield the whip-hand that Griffin was, perforce, obliged to look out for other premises, and had actually opened negotiations for the Duke of Leeds' residence, No. 21 St James's Square, and afterwards for a house in Bond Street, when Hedder, having been dismissed, came to his senses and gave in. In 1815 Griffin & Co. largely reconstructed the premises in St James's Street, and an additional guinea was added to the members' subscriptions in consequence. Further improvements were made in 1823 and again in 1846, and in 1857 the club-house was enlarged by the addition to it of No. 2 Park Place, which was purchased from the executors of a Mr Bidwell for £5600 odd. It appears that the library was transferred to the new premises, but that otherwise they were occupied as a private house by Banderet till his death in 1880. As a matter of fact, Banderet had himself held the lease of the original club-house from 1854, the landlord being Mr Haldimand; but in that year the latter sold it to the club for £25,000. In 1889-1890 a great improvement to the club was effected by the regular incorporation of No. 2 Park Place in it. By this a much more commodious library was gained, and various other drastic alterations were possible, making for the enhanced convenience of the members.

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[1] These details, and others affecting the internal economy of the club, will be found in the excellent and highly valuable volume to which I have already referred in the text—*The Memorials of Brooks's.*

Brooks's is unique, I believe, in containing a club within a club, for here "The Fox Club" was instituted in memory of the great man with whom the present institution is so indissolubly connected. In Brooks's "great room" its meetings are held, and although no speeches are allowed, certain toasts, four in number, the first of them being, " In the Memory of Charles James Fox," are given at the annual dinners, their key-note being Fox and Reform.

In a club like Brooks's it may well be imagined that there is no lack of anecdotes connected with its members. Practically all these *ana* have, however, been repeated so often, and are so well known by this time, that a recapitulation of them, other than in the most allusive form, would be supererogatory. Here it was that Wilberforce, fresh to London life, came and played faro, to be warned by a zealous friend, who, in his turn, was expressively bidden by Selwyn, "who kept the bank, not to interrupt Mr Wilberforce, who could not be better employed"; here George, Prince of Wales, enunciated a certain theory of Dr Darwin's, only to have it killed by the apt ridicule of Sheridan ; here Sherry retorted in an extempore couplet, on Whitbread, the brewer's denunciation of the malt tax ; Sir Philip Francis, well sustaining the character of "Brutus" given him by Rogers, here once made the retort to Roger Wilbraham apropos of Government rewards, which is famous ; it was at Brooks's that Fox and Fitzpatrick played cards on one occasion from ten at night to six in the morning, with a waiter standing by to tell the sleepy gamesters whose deal it was ; Fox, too, it was who, having lost his last shilling, here, at faro, was found the next morning by Topham Beauclerk, not in despair, but calmly reading Herodotus. *Foxiana* is, of course, the backbone of the Brooks's anecdotes—Fox, comfortably settling himself to sleep, with his head resting on the card table where he had lost a fortune ; Fox twitting Adams about Government powder, which led to a famous duel, when, at the harmless close of the encounter, the wit remarked : "Adams, you'd have killed me if it had not been Government powder" ; Fox, once and once only, rising from the gambling table a winner of a large sum, most of which he paid away to his creditors and lost the rest again almost immediately. But besides Fox we have tales of other celebrities: Sheridan and the story of his forced election, and how his opponents, Lord Bessborough and George Selwyn, were hoaxed into absence from the ballot, and his candidature thus made secure, the Prince of Wales being a principal in the ruse. "Fighting" Fitzgerald and the even more exciting incident of *his* election—forced on members terrorised by the Irish bully and fire-eater; Alderman Combe administering a well-deserved retort to that impudent puppy Brummell; the Duke of Devonshire coming to the club every night to partake of a supper of broiled blade-bone of mutton; Poodle Byng autocratically rebuking a new member for lighting a cigar under the balcony[1] of the club-house; Raikes, long a member, but for the first time entering the club in the wake of Brougham for the purpose of insulting him—a proceeding which nearly resulted in a duel; and, to make somewhere an end, the Duke of York, with certain boon companions, in a drunken frolic, breaking into the club-house at three o'clock in the morning, and destroying as much in the way of furniture, etc., as they could, before peace was established.

Among the members' names will be seen that of Mr Benjamin Bathurst, who was elected in May 1808. He connects Brooks's with one of the strangest and most mysterious incidents of the time, for that gentleman, bound on a mission to Vienna in 1809, set out and was never heard of again. Whether he fell a victim to Napoleon's malignity, as has been surmised, has never been satisfactorily established, but a skeleton found in the wood of Quitznow (a place on his return route), so recently as 1910 was supposed to be that of the ill-fated envoy.

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[1] This no longer exists, of course.

Among other illustrious members of Brooks's may be mentioned Gibbon, elected in 1777; Burke, Hume, Horace Walpole, Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Lord Campbell, who considered it, and rightly, a high honour to belong to the club; Palmerston, and one of its few Radical members, Daniel O'Connell. The first Lord Crewe, who died in 1829, and had been connected with the club for sixty-five years, was the last survivor of the original members.

ARTHUR'S

The year after the establishment of Brooks's saw the formation of Arthur's. The fact that in its earliest days White's was often referred to as "Arthur's," on account of its having been run by Mr Arthur,[1] has led to the erroneous supposition that there was a connecting link between the two. This does not appear to have been the case. When the first White's was burnt down in 1733, Arthur removed elsewhere, as is indicated by an advertisement in *The Daily Post*, for 3rd May of that year. Subsequently a new club was formed, with its premises occupying the site of the original White's (or Arthur's) Chocolate House, and apparently took the name of Arthur's, from this circumstance and from this only.

After the fire at White's the house was rebuilt and was occupied by the club, till 1755, when it went to its present position on the other side of the street. Some ten years after, "Arthur's" was established in its old premises. It appears that Arthur's club-house remained in its original form till 1825, when the present structure was erected from the designs of Mr Hopper. No doubt some of the earlier building was incorporated in the new work, and a ground-floor room at the back is even yet, traditionally, known as the old gaming-room of White's, although its decorations have been modernised. The present club preserves its old restrictions as to smoking in the library and morning-room, but as it possesses a fine lounge-hall, where tobacco is not banned, this disability is not of importance.

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[1] See account of White's.

Arthur's has always been something of a country gentleman's club, and preserves many characteristics of those earlier days when, according to Mr Ralph Nevill,[1] "sheep points and bullocks on the rubber" was a not uncommon form of betting.

For the rest, Arthur's is much in the position of a country whose annals are not tempestuous or particularly notable, and, as such, may, according to the old saying, be accounted happy. At any rate, its classic façade is not by any means the least attractive feature in St James's Street.

THE THATCHED HOUSE

If we relied solely on The Thatched House as a club for interesting data, we should be hard put to it to fill a page with facts concerning it. For it has existed in this capacity only from 1865, and thus presents the anomaly of one of the younger clubs with a name that carries us back to the days when St James's Street was yet, if not exactly in the fields, at least characterised by those rural attributes which are to-day so alien to it. The club, however, takes its name from, and stands on the later site of, The Thatched House Tavern. This tavern had two periods of existence, so to speak: the first, from its establishment till 1843, when it occupied the site on which stands to-day the Conservative Club (founded in 1840, at 74 St James's Street); and the second, from 1845 to 1865, when it was settled at No. 86. I should mention that on the closing of the tavern in the latter year the Civil Service Club took over its premises, which very soon after became the home of The Thatched House Club, with the Thatched House Chambers built adjoining.

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[1] *London Clubs.*

The Thatched House Tavern, from which the club takes its name, occupied a considerable area of irregular outline, with a good frontage to St James's Street, and an alley, known as Thatched House Court, ran by the side of it and opened into Park Place. In Chawner's plan of St James's, dated 1834, the old Thatched House is shown lying back from the roadway, on ground which, with certain other tenements to its north, is now occupied by the Conservative Club. In this plan a smaller house next to it, on its south side, is marked as the new Thatched House, and it is on the site of the latter that the club of this name now stands. The original Thatched House Tavern, so far as its site is concerned, is thus the predecessor rather of the Conservative Club than of The Thatched House Club.

The old tavern obviously took its rustic name from the character of its roof. When it was first erected is a question, but it seems pretty clear that it must have dated from the period when the Duchess of Cleveland sold a portion of the grounds of Cleveland House for building purposes. It may, indeed, have been a summer-house belonging to the mansion enlarged and adapted to the purposes of a tavern, and hence its rustic character preserved. In any case, Cleveland House (then Berkshire House) was erected about 1630, and the portion of its grounds on which The Thatched House Tavern subsequently stood was sold by the Duchess during the latter part of Charles II.'s reign. Roughly, then, the establishment of the tavern may be dated from about this period. One of its more illustrious frequenters was the ubiquitous Dick Steele, and we may be quite certain that Addison was another, but Swift was, according to his *Journal to Stella*, a still more assiduous visitor here. On 27th

December we find him entertaining the "Society" to which he belonged at dinner here, when "brother Bathurst sent for wine, the house affording none." On the previous 20th of December he had written: "I dined, you know, with our Society, and that odious Secretary would make me President next week; so I must entertain them this day se'nnight at The Thatched House Tavern." The dinner cost him no less than seven guineas, which he paid on the following 2nd January "to the fellow at the tavern where I treated the Society." Five days later he tells Stella that he had that morning been "to give the Duke of Ormond notice of the honour done him to make him one of our Society, and to invite him on Thursday next to The Thatched House." The 10th was the day fixed, but the Duke could not be present, having received a command to dine with Prince Eugene. In Swift's *Birthday Verses on Mr Ford*, the tavern is indirectly referred to in the couplet:

> "The Deanery House may well be match'd,
> Under correction, with the Thatch'd."

Although in *London Past and Present* it is stated that the tavern stood from 1711 on the site of the Conservative Club, yet it is, as I have before surmised, of earlier origin, for Charles Gildon, who wrote *The Complete Art of Poetry* and other forgotten pieces, places a scene in his *Comparison between the Two Stages*, published in 1702, at The Thatched House Tavern.[1]

Apart from its daily use as a tavern, or ale-house, as Lord Thurlow once denominated it, The Thatched House[2] was one of those places where various societies held their meetings. The "Society" referred to by Swift was one of the earliest of these. A still better remembered club was "The Society of Dilettanti," formed in 1734, of which Walpole not very fairly wrote that it was a club for which the nominal qualification was having been in Italy, and the real one, being drunk. The history of this fraternity has been written. Its splendid publications are well known. The aid it afforded to classic art is reflected in buildings, public and domestic, throughout the country. But nothing has, perhaps, better kept its fame alive than the fine series of portraits of its members which, by a rule of the club, those members were bound to have painted for presentation to the club. Three of them were by Sir Joshua, but the greater number were executed by Knapton, the official painter to the body; at a later date Lawrence and West contributed a few. These works of art, perpetuating the features of the many illustrious members, and reminding one of the earlier effort in this direction of the Kit-Kat Club, were hung round the large room at The Thatched House, where the club had its gatherings, until the demolition of the premises, when it, with its artistic property, was removed to Willis's Rooms in King Street, and later to the Grafton Gallery.

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[1] Curiously enough, this play is referred to in *London Past and Present*.

[2] In his rooms over The Thatched House the late Mr Salting assembled his wonderful collections of pictures and *objets d'art*.

The ceiling of the room used by the Dilettanti was painted to represent the sky, and was crossed by gold cords interlacing each other, and from their knots were hung three large glass chandeliers. A drawing by T. H. Shepherd shows the room decorated by its portraits and two fine carved marble mantelpieces.[1]

Prominent among other fraternities[2] which used to meet at The Thatched House, was the famous Literary Club, now represented by The Club, the records of the latter being almost as fully represented in Grant Duff's *Diary* as are those of the former in the pages of Boswell.

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[1] Timbs' *Clubs of London.*

[2] Timbs, on the authority of Admiral W. H. Smyth, the historian of the Royal Society Club, gives the following list of clubs which held their meetings at The Thatched House in 1860:—The Institute of Archives, the Catch Club, the Johnson Club, the Dilettanti Society, the Farmers', the Geographical, the Geological, the

The Literary Club, after meeting at various places—The Turk's Head in Gerrard Street and Prince's in Sackville Street among them—moved to Parsloe's in St James's Street, at the beginning of 1792, and to The Thatched House just seven years later. It was, too, at this house that, in June 1815, the Yacht Club was formed, afterwards to be known far and wide as the Royal Yacht Squadron; while, in 1791, the Architects' Club was initiated here, Dance, Holland, Wyatt, Gandon, etc., being original members.[1]

The Thatched House Tavern disappeared, as we have seen, in 1865, a portion of it having been taken down as early as 1844, when a stone-fronted edifice, called the Thatched House Chambers, arose on its site. It was next door to The Thatched House that Rowland, of Macassar oil fame, had his shop. He was a French *émigré*, and came to London with the Bourbons on the outbreak of the Revolution, returning to France in 1814. He was the most fashionable *coiffeur* of the day, and his charge for cutting hair alone was five shillings.

On the site of the new Thatched House Tavern the

Linnean and the Literary Societies, the Navy Club, the Philosophers' Club, the Royal College of Physicians' Club, the Political Economy Club, the Royal Academy Club, the Royal Astronomical Society, the Royal Institution Club, the Royal London Yacht Club, the Royal Naval Club, the Royal Society Club, the St Albans Medical Club, the St Bartholomew's Contemporaries, the Star Club, the Statistical Club, the Sussex Club, and the Union Society of St James's—a goodly list!

By the by, it is not *de rigueur* to speak of the society as a *club*, and members doing so submit to a fine.

[1] See *Life of Gandon.*

Civil Service Club was formed in 1865. Eight years later it was rechristened The Thatched House Club, as we know it. Adjoining it on the south side, and occupying a part of No. 87 St James's Street, was at one time the Egerton Club, which is, however, no longer in existence, and, so far as I can learn, never had any history.

THE CONSERVATIVE CLUB

As we have seen, the Conservative club-house stands on ground a portion of which was formerly occupied by The Thatched House Club. It has thus a certain historic interest, although the present club dates only from 1840, in which year it was formed as a kind of overflow club to The Carlton. The club-house was designed jointly by Basevi and Sydney Smirke, and was erected during 1843-1845, being formally opened on 19th February of the latter year. Apart from the interest attaching to this spot, from the fact of The Thatched House having stood there, it has a further one, for in an adjoining house, on the site of the present club, then occupied by Elmsley the bookseller, Gibbon was accustomed to lodge, and here died in 1794[1]; while in another, in earlier days forming one of a range of shops with low elevations, Rowland, famous for his Macassar oil, had his emporium,[2] as I have before stated.

The Conservative Club buildings cost just over £73,000, of which nearly £3000 was expended on encaustic decorations to the interior, executed by Sang. Timbs, in his notes on the place, gives a description of its architectural details, a form of writing so dull and unmeaning to the general reader that I dispense with it here, confining myself to the statement that the exterior is a combination of the Corinthian and Roman-Doric styles. A fact recorded by the writer, however, which is of some interest, is that Sir Robert Peel is said only once to have entered the club of which so many chiefs of the Conservative Party have been and are members, the solitary occasion being when he was shown round to view the then recently completed internal decorations.

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[1] This house stood at the south corner of Little St James's Street in those days.

[2] His advertisements speak of *des vertues incomparables de l'Huile de Macassar*, which gives point to Byron's lines in *Don Juan*:

"In virtues nothing earthly could surpass her,
Save thine incomparable oil, 'Macassar.'"

THE NEW UNIVERSITY CLUB

In point of date this club comes next on our list, for it was established in 1863, and is housed in that vast-windowed, rather ecclesiastical, building which Alfred Waterhouse designed for it. In Tallis's *Views* it will be seen that the site of this club, No. 57, with the adjoining house (No. 58), was then occupied by Symons's Hotel, the two buildings being thrown into one.

Beyond the facts that The New University is the only 'Varsity club in St James's Street, that its frontage stands out in a prominent way, and that it is obviously a flourishing concern, there does not appear to be any particular reason (unless, of course, you be a member or a guest) for loitering at it.

The same may be said for the

ROYAL SOCIETIES CLUB

which is the most modern in St James's Street, having been formed so recently as 1894. As the last-named club represents the 'Varsities, so does this one learned societies of various kinds, which fact differentiates it from other clubs in our street. Beyond this its interest may be said to be self-centred.

THE DEVONSHIRE CLUB

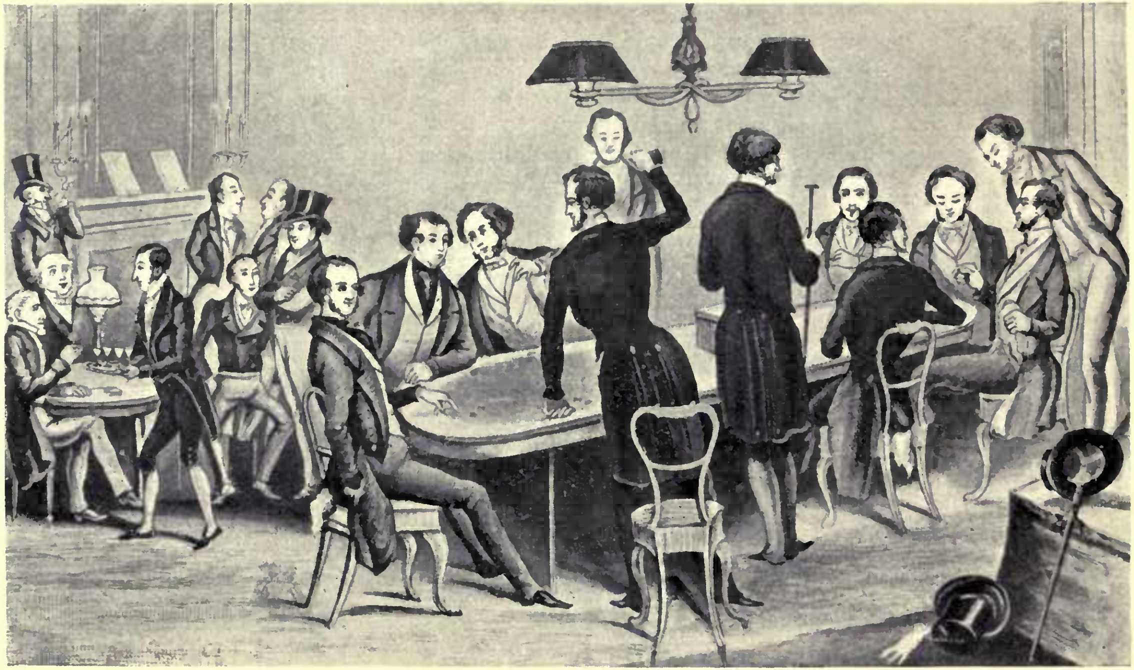
was established in 1875, and should thus have taken precedence of the Royal Societies, but there is a motive for placing it last, as will be seen. The club-house was the work of C. J. Phipps—at least, that architect remodelled it out of the earlier building standing on this site, notably Crockford's, certain relics of which are still preserved in the later institution in the shape of the original ballot-box and some chairs once used in the gaming-rooms of the ex-fishmonger. As its name denotes, The Devonshire is, or was, political. Its special shade of opinion is likewise thus indicated, or rather was before Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill tore up political distinctions by the roots and removed the once recognised and unmistakable landmarks.

For us the chief interest of The Devonshire centres in the fact that it is, architecturally, a reconstructed but, of course, very different Crockford's. Its exterior, indeed, is not greatly altered, as may be seen by extant pictures of the place as it was in George IV.'s time. It is for this reason that what has to be said about Crockford's properly comes in this place.

CROCKFORD'S

The name of Crockford's is as frequent in Georgian social annals as is that of Almack's. In common with the latter, it has its place in contemporary literature, and the novel entitled *Almack's* can be matched by the poem called *Crockford House.*

Crockford, who began life as a fish salesman near Temple Bar, having made some good speculations in gambling,



D'ORSAY THROWING A MAIN AT CROCKFORD'S

opened a hazard bank in Piccadilly, and apparently had another, after the closing of the Piccadilly establishment, in Bolton Row, according to the lines in *Crockford House*:

> "Crockford, voting Bolton Row
> On a sudden, vastly low,
> And that gentlemen should meet
> Only in St James's Street,
> Broke his quarters up, and here
> Entered on a fresh career."

In a word, he acquired three houses in St James's Street—Nos. 50-52—and in 1827[1] erected the splendid building designed for him by the Brothers Wyatt, the decorations of which alone are said to have cost nearly £100,000. The gambling-room (now the dining-room of The Devonshire) was *the* feature of what, on its opening, was described as "The New Pandemonium" by a generation that loved long words. Nothing was forgotten by this past master in the art of running a gaming-house, which could tempt men of rank and fashion to patronise the new premises, from the most elaborate and comfortable surroundings to the cookery of Ude[2] and Francatelli;

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[1] He had probably purchased a house earlier, as I find by the Rate Books for 1813 that he was then rated on a rental of £160 in St James's Street. This house was, doubtless, No. 53, next door (south) to Crockford's, where the proprietor lived and died.

[2] Disraeli, writing to his sister in February 1839, says: "There has been a row at Crockford's and Ude dismissed. He told the committee he was worth £10,000 a year. Their new man is quite a failure. So I think the great artist may yet return from Elba. He told Wombwell that, in spite of his £10,000 a year, he was miserable in retirement; that he sat all day with his hands before him doing nothing. Wombwell suggested the exercise of his art for the gratification of his own appetite. 'Bah!' he said, 'I have not been into my kitchen once. I hate the sight of my kitchen; I dine on roast mutton dressed by a cook-maid.' He shed tears, and said he had been only twice in St James's Street

and if some, like Fox, were attracted by the desire of excitement, others, like Sefton, were drawn hither by gastronomic considerations. I suppose there was hardly a well-known man of the day who had not been a more or less frequent visitor to Crockford's gilded saloons, and the amount of money lost and gained there must have been prodigious.

Stories concerning the place are as the sands of the sea; the contemporary letters and diaries are full of them. Hazard was *the* game played here, and Gronow is probably not far wrong when he supposes that Crockford won the whole of the ready money of the then existing generation. The captain's description of the place and its *habitués* must be known to most people, and it seems that in some of the smaller rooms the play was more hazardous even than in the larger gaming saloon. "Who," he writes, "that ever entered that dangerous little room can ever forget the large green table with the croupiers, Page, Darking and Bacon, with their suave manners, sleek appearance, stiff, white neckcloths, and the almost miraculous quickness and dexterity with which they swept away the money of the unfortunate punters?" What time "the old fishmonger himself, seated snug and sly at his desk in the corner of the room, watchful as the dragon that guarded the golden apples of the Hesperides, would only give credit to sure and approved signatures." It was, indeed, a case of the spider and the flies—a golden spider in a gilded web.

In Gronow's pages you may see two pictures, one

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since his retirement (which was in September), and that he made it a rule never to walk on the same side as the club-house. 'Ah, I love that club, though they are *ingrats.* Do not be offended, Mr Wombwell, if I do not take off my hat when we meet; but I have made a vow I will never take off my hat to a member of the committee.' 'I shall always take my hat off to you, Mr Ude,' was the rejoinder."

entitled *Votaries of the Goddess of Chance—St James's*, the other, *Play at Crockford's Club, 1843. Count Dorsay throwing a Main*, which illustrate the accompanying description. The latter is dated a year before Crockford's death, after which event the premises were sold by auction.[1]

Crockford had retired in 1840, and the event seems to have spread the same kind of consternation among the members as might the closing of a bank. "One great resignation has occurred," writes Disraeli on 12th June 1840. "Last night Crockford sent in a letter announcing his retirement. 'Tis a thunderbolt, and nothing else is talked of; 'tis the greatest shock to domestic credit since Howard and Gibbs. Some members are twelve years in arrear of subscriptions. One man owes £700 to the coffee-room; all must now be booked up. The consternation is general."

Two or three other clubs tried their chances there subsequently, among them the Military, Naval and County Service Club, opened in 1849 but closed three years later; then the Wellington Restaurant opened its doors there. "Alas, poor Crocky's," wails Gronow, "shorn of its former glory has become a sort of refuge for the destitute—a cheap dining-house"; and later it was an auction mart. When the Devonshire Club started here the place may be said to have thrown off that incubus which was the curse of an earlier generation and to have proved that men may meet without necessarily wanting to fleece each other or be fleeced.

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[1] Thirty-two years of the lease were unexpired, and this was disposed of for £2900. It must be added, however, that the ground-rent stood at £1400 per annum. The excellent monograph on the club written by Mr H. T. Waddy, and published in 1919, records all, or practically all, that is known of Crockford's and The Devonshire.

At a house next door to Crockford's, on the north side,[1] the Guards' Club was first established in 1813. In Tallis's *Views* it may be seen, a narrow, tall building, not very dissimilar from the "Guards'" late premises in Pall Mall. To the north of the latter was the corner house, then occupied by Hoby, the well-known bootmaker. On 9th November 1827 the Guards' club-house suddenly collapsed. This was caused, it is said, by the excavations made during the erection of Crockford's, which weakened the foundations of the adjoining house. The circumstance is alluded to in the following opening lines of *Crockford House*:—

"Oft as up St James's Hill I
Push along for Piccadilly,
There what Cockney crowds I meet,
Gazing, wondering in the street
At the chasm in front of White's,
Strangest, fearfullest of sights!"

A note to this passage states that "the chasm is here described as it appeared in the beginning of last November, just before the fall of the Guards' club-house." Another set of verses begins by asking:

"What can these workmen be about?
Do, Crockford, let the secret out,
Why thus your houses fall?
Quoth he: 'Since folks are not in town,
I find it better to pull down
Than have no pull at all.'"[2]

Another club, established on this side of St James's Street, was Weltzie's. It is said to have been formed in opposition to Brooks's, because Tarleton and Jack Payne had been blackballed at the latter, and their friend, the Prince of Wales, withdrew his membership. It occupied No. 63 St James's Street (afterwards Fenton's Hotel), and was established there certainly before 1779. Nine years later William Grenville, writing to the Marquis of Buckingham, remarks: "The Prince of Wales has taken this year very much to play, and has gone so far as to win or lose £2000 or £3000 in a night. He is now, together with the Duke of York, forming a new club at Weltzie's, and this will probably be the scene of some of the highest gaming which has been seen in town. All the young men are to belong to it." [1]

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[1] That on the south side was for long, from 1873, the headquarters of the Junior St James's Club.

[2] The satirical poem entitled *St James's* was addressed to Mr Crockford, and contains much amusing, though often very allusive, information about his establishment and its *habitués*. It was published in 1827, and was dedicated to Tom Moore.

Weltzie was the Prince of Wales's house steward, clerk of the kitchen, factotum, go-between, what you will, and no doubt he took the St James's Street premises on the advice, perhaps the order, of his Royal Highness, who may almost be regarded as the real proprietor, although it is not probable that he put any money into the concern, except what he lost at play.

It would seem that good living was as much a characteristic of Weltzie's as high play, and in this respect it resembled Watier's in Piccadilly, also started by one of the Prince of Wales's dependants.

When, in May 1779, the Knights of the Bath gave their famous ball at the Opera House, the supper was provided "by Mr Weltzie of St James's Street, whose spirit," so runs a contemporary account, "and skill on this occasion, we fear, will far exceed his profit."

I imagine that Weltzie originally started a kind of restaurant at No. 63, and that later the club formed by the Prince was opened in the already established premises.

Much the same sort of place was Parsloe's in St James's

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[1] *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III.*, by the Duke of Buckingham, vol. i., p. 363.

Street, where the Literary Club met in 1792, although this establishment was merely a convivial one and did not pander to the gambling propensities of the period.

As we have seen, the clubs either were held in the chocolate or coffee houses of St James's Street or were, as in the case of White's, direct outcomes of these establishments.

One of the earlier ones, however, is not known except in its simpler capacity, for Ozinda's, as it was called, from its proprietor's name, at the bottom of the thoroughfare, "next door to the palace," seems to have been a chocolate-house and nothing more. It had Jacobite tendencies, and Swift records eating there in March 1712. In 1715 Guards were seen entering the place, and Mr Ozinda was, with Sir Richard Vivyan and Captain Forde, who had been found on the premises, brought out and carried away captive. What subsequently became of the house or its proprietor is not recorded.

We have more information about another once well-known coffee-house in St James's Street. This was

THE ST JAMES'S COFFEE-HOUSE

which stood three doors from the south-west corner of the thoroughfare, and thus was next door but one to the old Thatched House. Adjoining it, on the south side, was Gaunt's coffee-house, whither White's Club moved temporarily after the fire in 1733. Timbs states, in error, that the "St James's" was the "last house but one on the south-west corner" of the street. The Rate Books, however, show that Elliot,[1] who kept it, was three doors from

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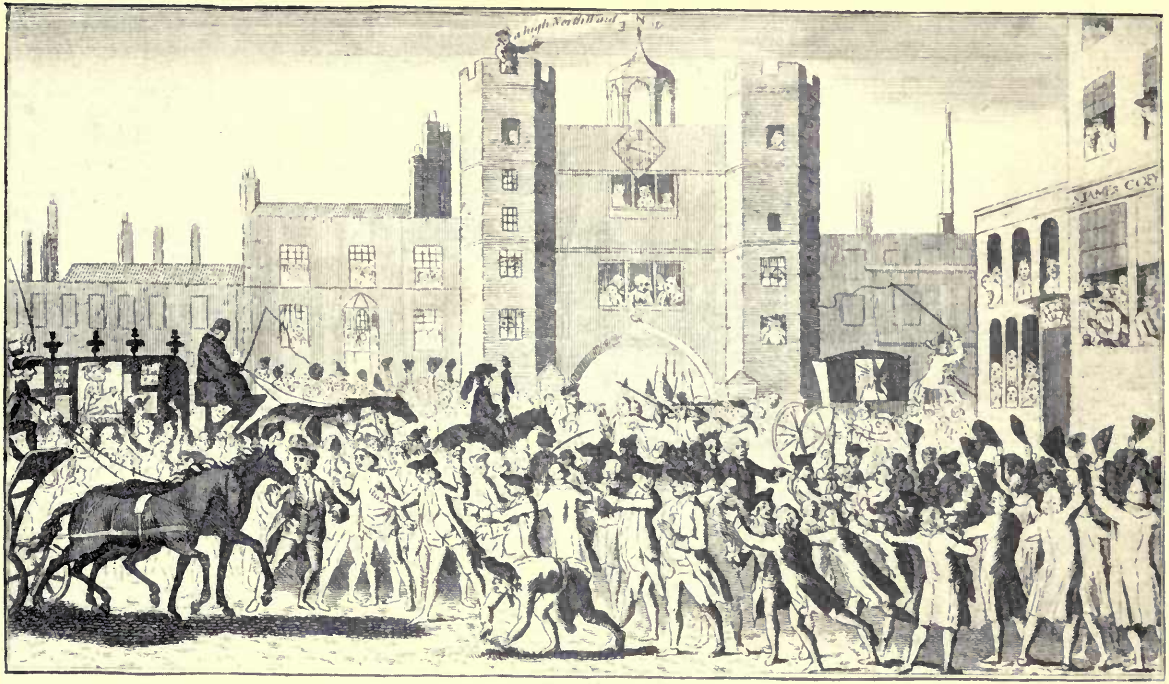
[1] He, or rather his wife, has been commemorated by Gay:

> "How vain are mortal man's endeavours,
> Said at Dame Elliot's, Master Travers."
> *The Quidnuncks.*


a high North Wind
E
N
W
JAMES's COFF

SEQUEL to the Battle of TEMPLE BAR.

SHEWING THE ST. JAMES'S COFFEE HOUSE

After an old print

the corner, while Morriss, who ran Gaunt's coffee-house, was next to him on the south, adjoining the corner house, once occupied by Lord Shelburne.

Just as Ozinda's and The Cocoa-Tree were pronounced Tory strongholds, so The St James's was the recognised headquarters of the Whigs.

The Tatler and *The Spectator* contain frequent references to it. For instance, a kind of synopsis of the intentions of the editors in No. 1 of the former tells us that "Foreign and Domestic News you will have from St James's Coffee-house"; and in No. 403 of *The Spectator* (12th June 1712) Addison, writing apropos a report of the French king's death, tells us how he went the round of the coffee and chocolate houses to obtain information regarding the rumour: "That I might begin as near the Fountain head as possible," he writes, "I first of all called in at St James's (coffee-house), where I found the whole outward room in a Buzz of Politics.[1] The Speculations were but very indifferent towards the Door, but grew finer as you advanced to the upper end of the Room, and were so very much improved by a knot of Theorists who sate in the inner Room, within the steam of the Coffee Pot, that I there heard the whole Spanish Monarchy disposed of, and all the Line of Bourbons provided for in less than a Quarter of an Hour." This passage gives us some idea of the plan of the house, its outer and inner rooms, the position of its coffee machine, etc.; while an advertisement (also from *The Spectator*, No. 24) informs us of the names of some of its *personnel*, and runs as follows:—

"To prevent all Mistakes that may happen among gentlemen of the other End of the Town, who come but once a week to St James's Coffee-house, either by miscalling the Servants, or requiring such things from them as are not properly within their respective Provinces: this is to give Notice, that Kidney, keeper of the Book-Debts of the outlying Customers, and Observer of those who go off without paying, having resigned that Employment, is succeeded by John Sowton, to whose Place of Enterer of Messages and first Coffee Grinder William Bird is promoted; and Samuel Burdock comes as Shoe Cleaner in the Room of the said Bird."

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[1] In No. 1 of *The Spectator* Addison says: "I appear on Sunday nights at the St James's Coffee-house, and sometimes join the Committee of Politics in the inner room as one who comes there to hear and improve."

When exactly the St James's coffee-house was first started is not quite clear, but that it was in existence in 1709 is proved by the fact that in that year Michael Cole first exhibited his globular oil-lamp here, an invention which "caught on" pretty quickly apparently, for an observant traveller notes, about this period, that "most of the streets are wonderfully well lighted, for in front of each house hangs a lantern or large globe of glass, inside of which is placed a lamp which burns all night."

A notable frequenter of the coffee-house was Swift, who, in his *Journal to Stella*, makes various allusions to it, chiefly in reference to letters being left there for him: "I will pay for their letters at the St James's Coffee-house that I may have them the sooner," he writes at a time when correspondence for which he was not so anxious was to be sent to him under care of Richard Steele, Esq., at the Cockpit in Westminster. On one occasion he passes part of the afternoon with Sir Matthew Dudley and Will: Frankland there. Sometimes he dates his letters from the St James's. In October 1710, however, he remarks that he is "not fond at all of St James's Coffee-house, as I used to be"; and adds, "I hope it will mend in winter." It was evidently dull just then, as its members were "all out of Town at Elections, or not come from their Country houses." Later, Swift asks that those who direct packets to him should do so under cover to Mr Addison at the St James's coffee-house. It appears that when letters arrived there they were fixed in a little glass frame in the bar, whither Swift, on one occasion, speaks of looking for one of M. D.'s (Stella's) letters in her "little handwriting."

It was at The St James's that the *Town Eclogues* were read on their first appearance, and in the "Advertisement" to the work the fact is thus recorded by the writer: "Upon reading them over at St James's Coffee-House they were attributed by the general voice to the production of a Lady of Quality. When I produced them at Button's the poetical jury there brought in a different verdict, and the foreman strenuously insisted that Mr Gay was the man." As in the famous discussion about the colour of the chameleon, both attributions were right and wrong, for it is now generally agreed that the work was a joint production, "The Drawing Room" being by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (the Lady of Quality), but, according to Pope, who himself contributed "The Basset-Table," the rest was "almost wholly Gay's."[1]

Another and more notable circumstance connects the St James's coffee-house with the annals of literature, for it was here that occurred the incident which caused Goldsmith to write his *Retaliation*. It was customary for a number of literary men to meet together here, among them being Johnson, Garrick, Doctor Bernard, Edmund and Richard Burke, Caleb Whitefoord, Thomson, Reynolds, Cumberland, etc. Cumberland gives the origin of these meetings in a dinner at Sir Joshua's, where Edmund Burke suggested that they should assemble occasionally at the St James's coffee-house. To these meetings Goldsmith invariably came late, and on one occasion some of the members produced mock epitaphs on "the late Dr Goldsmith," the only one that has survived being Garrick's:

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[1] See Spence's *Anecdotes*. The book was published by J. Roberts, "near the Oxford Arms in Warwick Lane," on 26th March 1716. See Underhill's *Poetical Works of John Gay*. 2 vols. 1893.

> "Here lies poet Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll;
> He wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll."

There has been some difference of opinion as to the exact circumstances and the mood in which Goldsmith took the friendly banter, but, in any case, the *Retaliation* was his retort to what some of his friends produced in the St James's coffee-house.[1] Two years after this harmless combat took place a different sort of encounter occurred at the coffee-house, and Lord Carlisle, writing to Selwyn in 1776, describes how "The Baron de Lingsing ran a French officer through the body on Thursday for laughing at the St James's Coffee-house." "I find," adds Carlisle, "he did not pretend that he himself was laughed at, but at that moment he chose that the world should be grave."

Among other prominent members may be mentioned St John, during the early years of the house's existence, and Dr Warton at a later period. It is recorded of the latter that often he would be found at breakfast there surrounded by officers of the Guards (who were also frequenters of the place) listening with interest and attention to his conversation.

At a still later date we get a glimpse of another literary celebrity at the "St James's," for, as a young man, Isaac Disraeli was accustomed to come up to London from his father's house at Enfield, in order to read the newspapers here.

The coffee-house did not exist for very many years after this, for in 1806 it was closed, its premises demolished, and a large block of buildings erected on its site. These, in turn, were pulled down a few years ago, and a still more elaborate structure raised in their place.

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[1] See, for a full account of the circumstances, Forster's *Life of Goldsmith*, 1871, vol. ii., p. 404 *et seq.*

As I have stated, Gaunt's coffee-house was next door to the "St James's," on the south. There seems to be practically no reference to it in contemporary literature, and little appears to be known of it, except the fact that White's for a time occupied it, as we have seen. Its site was, in the earlier years of the last century, covered by the large double house, run by one English as an hotel. This building was eventually pulled down and the new erection referred to above set up in its place.

VII

FAMOUS MEN AND WOMEN

It would probably be far easier to make a list of the famous men and women of the last two centuries who have not in one way or another been connected with St James's Street and its tributaries, than to give a complete record of those who have. When we remember that the whole of the social life and much of the political during the eighteenth century was focused round this thoroughfare; when we call to mind the associations of the two famous clubs which held, and to some extent still hold, sway here; when we recollect that the coffee-houses were then the resort of the great ones in all walks of life, and also recall the names of the illustrious people who actually lived in the thoroughfare or the byways out of it, it will not be difficult to realise how much St James's Street stood for during that period which, beginning with the reign of Anne, closed with the saddened, clouded days of George III.

During the last century the case is very parallel. The rise and extraordinary power wielded by the female oligarchy which directed the destinies of Almack's, the ever-increasing prosperity of White's and Brooks's, the fashion which made St James's Street the social thoroughfare *par excellence* of the Regency, all combined in sustaining the reputation of the street and in crowding it with the men and women whose names live in the political and fashionable annals of the period. Since those days, although certain marked changes have taken place here, the street has retained that character which it has borne for so long. Illustrious statesmen may no longer live in it (although in some of its by-streets they are still to be found, or were a few years since), but they may yet be seen perambulating its pavements. The clubs may no longer be quite the political centres they once were (such activity being now removed to Pall Mall), but politicians still enter their portals and look out from their windows. If no one to-day emulates the equestrian feats of Lord Petersham or the Jehu-like proclivities of "Old Q" or Lord Alvanley, the motor and the taxi bear to and fro men every whit as notable and as citizens far more useful. There are two reasons why St James's Street should always bear a unique character among London's innumerable thoroughfares: the presence at its lower end of St James's Palace, and the fact that London's chief western artery beats at its upper extremity. For if the Palace is no longer the residence of the Sovereign, it yet signifies the seat of the imperial dignity, official documents still bearing the time-honoured information that they emanate from the Court of St James's; and if Piccadilly has been rivalled in size by other thoroughfares, it yet remains essentially the principal source whence the life-blood of the west is pumped (so to phrase it) into those lesser arteries on both sides of it, of which the chief is the St James's Street of a thousand memories.

In the foregoing pages we have come across a variety of illustrious people who have either resided here or who have been connected with the thoroughfare in other ways —statesmen and politicians, poets and painters, literary men and men of leisure, roués of the days of the Stuarts and rakes of the days of the Guelphs. The Pulteneys and the Baldwins, who represent the earliest inhabitants, have given way to the stately form of Edmund Waller and the aristocratic mien of my Lord Berkshire; the beautiful Countess of Carlisle and the rather illusive Lady

Pickering have passed away in favour of the notorious Duchess of Cleveland and the super-proud Countess of Northumberland; Sir Allan Apsley and Sir John Duncombe, the scientific Lord Brouncker and the Jacobite Sir John Fenwick, have retired into the shades and have been replaced by Dr Swift and the Duke of Kingston. The beautiful Molly Lepell and Mr Maclean, highwayman, Mr Addison and Dick Steele are ghosts in whose footsteps tread other phantoms—Lord Nelson and Charles James Fox and the sedate Mr Wilberforce. Byron looks out of a window close by, a window from which Gillray falls headlong; "Old Q" drives where the Duke of Ormond drove on a memorable occasion. Down the steps of White's feet follow feet in endless succession—Sefton and Brummell and Raikes hard on Gilly Williams and George Selwyn and Horace Walpole—the chiefs of the Tory aristocracy in an endless succession of illustrious names. Brooks's disgorges a not less notable crowd, many of whom, like Lord March and Selwyn, were also among the members of White's. Mr Vernon, who founded the Jockey Club, and the Duke of Grafton, whom Junius attacked so virulently; Rodney, the great seaman, and Augustus Hervey, also a sea-dog, who married Elizabeth Chudleigh, afterwards Duchess of Kingston; Lord Cornwallis, Charles James Fox and Peter Beckford; Storer, the correspondent of Selwyn, and Hare of the many friends; Lord Ligonier, perpetuated by Reynolds, and Gibbon, who perpetuated the decadence of Rome. Grenville and Pitt and Coke of Norfolk, and Sheridan and Burke; Lord Sandwich—the "Jimmy Twitcher" of the caricaturists—and Lord William Russell, who was murdered by Courvoisier; while the *habitués* of The Cocoa-Tree and Boodle's, of the St James's coffee-house and Ozinda's join the throng and contribute their quota to the crowd.

The heyday of St James's Street was the eighteenth century—that period which stands out, in picturesqueness, from all other periods of English social life. Waller[1] may have strolled down the street often enough at an earlier date, when he lived "next doore to the Sugar Loafe." My Lord Clarendon must often have been seen passing out of Berkshire House; and the merry monarch himself, no doubt, loitered up from the Palace, with Rochester or Sedley, and perhaps Mr Evelyn, in his train, and probably Samuel Pepys on the outskirts, noting all things, including the vanity and outrageous behaviour of Lady Castlemaine.

The Duke of Ormond was waylaid by Blood at the top of the street on that famous occasion when hardly could all his Grace's attendants save him from abduction in broad daylight and in the very sight of the royal Palace. But it is the eighteenth century that leaves the chief reflected glamour on St James's Street; the eighteenth century, ranging from the days of Addison and Steele and Swift to those of Scott and Byron and Campbell; but chiefly the eighteenth century when Horace Walpole was writing his letters, when Selwyn was uttering his good things and Elizabeth Chudleigh was doing her unconventional ones. Indeed, it is to Walpole that we chiefly look for data about the life of fashionable London in those days; and Walpole never disappoints us. About St James's Street and its life and clubs he is full of amusing and interesting details. Open his correspondence almost at random, and you will find something bearing on the subject. For instance we have him, in 1745, writing to George Montagu, and telling how "one Mrs Comyns, an elderly gentlewoman, has lately taken a house in St James's Street," and how "some young gentlemen went thither t'other night. 'Well, Mrs Comyns, I hope there won't be the same disturbances here that were at your other house in Air Street.' 'Lord, Sir, I never had any disturbances there; mine was as quiet a house as any in the neighbourhood, and a great deal of good company came to me: it was only the ladies of quality that envied me.' 'Envied you! why, your house was pulled down about your ears!' 'Oh, dear, Sir! Don't you know how that happened?' 'No, pray, how?' 'My dear Sir, it was Lady Caroline Fitzroy, who gave the mob two guineas to demolish my house, because her ladyship fancied I got women for Colonel Conway.' I beg you will visit Mrs Comyns when you come to town; she has infinite humour."[1]

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[1] On one occasion Waller writes as follows to his wife:—

"The Duke of Buckingham with the Lady Sh (rewsbury ?) came hither last night at this tyme and carried me to the usual place to supper, from whence I returned home at four o'clock this morning, having been earnestly entreated to supp with them again to-night, but such howers can not be always kept, therefore I shall eat my two eggs alone and go to bedd."

Again, it is Walpole who tells us of Maclean, the highwayman, and his companion, Plunket, who had lodgings respectively in St James's and Jermyn Streets, that "their faces are as known about St James's as any gentleman's who lives in that quarter"; as well as of the old Countess of Northumberland, who lived on the site of White's club-house, that "when she went out a footman, bareheaded, walked on each side of her coach, and a second coach with her women attended her." Here is another and later vignette of a St James's Street vehicular scene: "The Duke of Queensberry," writes Lord Carlisle to Selwyn (1779), "has added a little chaise with ponies, so that with his *vis-à-vis,* Kitty's coach and his riding horses, St James's Street seems entirely to belong to him, and he has an exclusive right to drive in it."

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[1] This, doubtless, refers to the "certain notorious house in St James's Street" of which Besant speaks.

A still later one is supplied by Moore[1] on the occasion of his accompanying Byron on a visit to Tom Campbell at Sydenham in 1811: "When we were on the point of setting out from his lodging in St James's Street, it being then about mid-day, he said to the servant who was shutting the door of the *vis-à-vis*: 'Have you put in the pistols?' and was answered in the affirmative."

Apropos of Byron's residence in St James's Street, although his letters prove him to have lodged at No. 8 (where his huge medallion portrait may still be seen on the face of the house) in 1809, and again from October 1811 to July 1812, I find one communication of his dated from Reddish's Hotel, in the street, on 23rd July 1811. The name of another poet, Campbell, reminds me that he, too, once lodged in St James's Street, in 1836, at York Chambers, then No. 41. Although in some respects Byron is the street's most famous ghost, the thoroughfare seems far more closely identified with the shade of another great man—Charles James Fox; for not only did he live here, as well as in Arlington Street, for a time, but the larger portion of his life must have been spent at the hazard tables of the St James's Street clubs, with which his name is so intimately identified. He lodged next door to Brooks's,[2] and it was hither he returned from Italy on 24th November 1788, after a journey of some eight hundred miles performed in nine days, to be present at the debates on the Regency Bill. Seven years earlier his affairs had reached one of their periodical crises, and Walpole relates how, as he came up St James's Street, he saw "a cart and porters at Charles's door, coppers and old chests of drawers loading. In short, his success at faro has awakened his host of creditors, but unless his bank had swelled to the size of the Bank of England, it would not have yielded a sop for each. Epsom, too, had been unpropitious, and one creditor has actually seized and carried off his goods, which did not seem worth removing. As I returned, full of this scene, whom should I find sauntering by my own door (in Arlington Street) but Charles. He came up and talked to me at the coach-window on the Marriage Bill with as much sang-froid as if he knew nothing of what had happened."

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[1] *Life of Byron*, vol. i., p. 404.

[2] His rooms were on the first floor, and immediately above them were apartments occupied by James Hare—"the Hare with many friends."

To Fox's lodgings here the Prince of Wales frequently came, and oftener than not remained "drinking royally" with his host, who, as soon as he rose, which was very late, had a levée of his followers and of the members of the gaming set at Brooks's. His outer room he styled his Jerusalem chamber, because of the Jews who waited in it to offer him pecuniary assistance, or to dun him for loans already made. Fox was accustomed to borrow even from the waiters at his clubs, and the very chairmen in St James's Street were in the habit of importuning him for the payment of their trifling charges.[1]

It was probably in Fox's house that Mrs Gunning and her daughter lodged in 1791. "The Signora and her infanta now, *for privacy*, are retired into St James's Street, next door to Brooks's Club," writes Walpole to Miss Berry. This lady was the wife of General John Gunning, and her daughter, Elizabeth, was thus niece to the beautiful Duchess of Argyll. In 1791 this daughter became notorious in connection with her own and her mother's attempts to prove that the Marquises of Lorne and Blandford had both made her offers of marriage. They denied the truth of Miss Gunning's statement, and she remained single till 1803, when she became the wife of a Major Plunkett.

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[1] By the by, the last stand for sedan chairs was in St James's Street, and down to 1821 six or seven could still be found there.

Three years after this Gibbon died at his lodgings in St James's Street. His rooms were at No. 76, then over Elmsley's, the bookseller's, and on the site of what is now part of the Conservative Club. According to Gibbon himself, the lodging was "cheerful, convenient, somewhat dear, but not so much as a hotel; a species of habitation for which I have not conceived any great affection."[1]

He wrote thus cheerfully, but death was not far from him. Morison[2] tells us that his malady was dropsy, but complicated with other disorders. After twice undergoing the operation of tapping in November 1793, he went to visit Lord Sheffield, but rapidly became so much worse that he determined to return to London in order to be under the joint care of Clive and Baillie. He left Sheffield Place on 7th January 1794. Six days later another operation took place and gave him temporary relief: "Next day he received some visitors, and thought himself well enough to omit the opium draught which for some time he had been used to take. In the course of conversation he remarked that he thought himself a good life for two, twelve, or perhaps twenty years. About six he ate the wing of a chicken and drank three glasses of Madeira. Though he had a bad night, on the morning of the 15th he professed to feel *plus adroit* than he had been for three months past. He wished to rise, and it was with some difficulty his servants persuaded him to keep his bed until the doctor called, who was expected at eleven. At the time appointed the doctor came; but Gibbon was then visibly dying, and about a quarter before one he ceased to breathe. He wanted just eighty-three days more to have completed his fifty-seventh year."

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[1] Letter to Lord Sheffield, dated 9th November 1793, from St James's Street.

[2] *Life of Gibbon.*

Gibbon, it will be remembered, was a member of both The Cocoa-Tree and Brooks's, and in his journal will be found references to these clubs. A curious memento, connecting Fox and Gibbon with the latter, must be among the treasures of some collector, for, when Fox's belongings were sold, after his death, there was found the first volume of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, presented by Gibbon to the statesman, who had written on one of the blank leaves this pregnant note: "The author, at Brooks's, said there was no salvation for this country until six heads of the principal persons in administration were laid upon the table. Eleven days after, this same gentleman accepted a place of lord of trade under those very Ministers, and has acted with them ever since!"

St James's Street, which sheltered Waller and Pope and Byron; where Maclean, the highwayman, lodged cheek by jowl with the "quality" whom he robbed; where Wolfe once stayed and wrote to Pitt asking for employment in 1758; and where Gillray threw himself out of a window; where the clubs and coffee-houses took in and gave forth half the intellect and aristocracy of the land; where Dr Johnson, requiring a pair of shoe-buckles, came to the shop of Wirgman, here, to get them, as faithfully recorded by Boswell—St James's Street is, notwithstanding its famous *habitués* and its notable events, as much associated with the name of Betty, the fruit woman, as with that of any other person during the eighteenth century.

Readers of Walpole's *Letters* will not need to be told who Betty was; those whose studies have not included this source of information will probably like to know. Her real name was Elizabeth Neale, but she was known to everyone who was anyone as Betty, *tout court*. Her shop was at No. 62, and here politicians and men and women of *ton* were accustomed to lounge. Betty not only knew everything that was passing in the world of fashion and politics, she was also well versed in the family history of her patrons; she had a pleasing manner, and is said to have been full of anecdotes and stories, which she retailed to her clientèle.

Mason, in his *Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*, has immortalised her in the following lines, about which, by the by, Walpole[1] tells us she was in raptures:—

> "There, at one glance, the royal eye shall meet
> Each varied beauty of St James's Street;
> Stout Talbot there shall ply with hackney chair,
> And patriot Betty fix her fruit-shop there."

Of Betty's origin nothing seems to be known, except that she was born, in 1730, in St James's Street. She was accustomed to say that she had slept out of the thoroughfare only on two occasions: once when she went to pay a visit in the country, and once when she went to Windsor on the occasion of an Installation of Knights of the Garter.

When Walpole visited Vauxhall in 1750 with Lady Caroline Petersham and others, on the famous occasion recorded in his *Letters*,[2] Betty accompanied the party with hampers of strawberries and cherries. In 1763 we find Lord Holland telling Selwyn that he "sent Betty a present by Lord Bateman, which she received very graciously indeed"; and in the Selwyn correspondence are frequent allusions to the lady.

Betty retired from business about 1783, and went to live in a house in Park Place, in which she died on 30th August 1797, at the age of sixty-seven. In an obituary notice of her in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, the following summary of her attainments appears:—"She had the first pre-eminence in her occupation, and might justly be called the Queen of Applewomen. Her knowledge of families and characters of the last and present age was wonderful. She was a woman of pleasing manner and conversation, and abounding with anecdote and entertainment. Her company was ever sought for by the highest of our men of rank and fortune."

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[1] Letter to Mason, 27th March 1773.

[2] To Montagu, 23rd June 1750.

It was near Betty's shop that Thomas Wirgman had his establishment, where he carried on business as a goldsmith and jeweller, and where once at least (as I have mentioned) the great Dr Johnson was a customer. Wirgman was as much a character in his way as was Betty in hers. He made a considerable fortune, but got rid of most of it in developing his version of Kantesian philosophy. He had paper specially made for his books, the same sheet consisting of several different colours, and it is said that one book of four hundred pages cost him no less than £2276. Among his publications was a grammar of the five senses, for the use of children, which, he declared, if generally used in schools, would restore peace and harmony to the world, with the result that virtue would everywhere replace crime. There must have been more than a touch of madness in a man who hoped, under any circumstances, to bring about such a desideratum; but it is pleasant to think of honest Wirgman working out his Utopian theories within sound of the gambling hells of St James's Street and surrounded on all sides by the laxity and extravagance of his essentially free-and-easy century.

To-day it is rather difficult to reconstruct the St James's Street of history and legend from the changed character and rebuilt outlines of the existing thoroughfare. Thackeray[1] says that, "after looking in *The Rake's*

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[1] Thackeray, by the by, was lodging at No. 88, in 1843-1844, when engaged on *Barry Lyndon*, which he began and finished here.

Progress at Hogarth's picture of St James's Palace-gate, you may people the street, but little altered within these hundred years, with the gilded carriages and thronging chairmen that bore the courtiers, your ancestors, to Queen Caroline's Drawing-room more than a hundred years ago."[1] But Thackeray wrote when the thoroughfare had, as he says, not materially altered; before the splendid stone offices of banks and insurance offices arose in it; before the motor and the taxi made the chariot and the sedan seem as dead as the dodo; before many of the clubs that now exist were thought of. One or two things may, however, even now serve as the alembic to one's fancy, and may so operate on the imagination as to cause us, for an interspace, to throw our minds back to the days when the great Sir Robert and the masculine-minded Queen Caroline ruled the kingdom between them; when the swarthy visage of Fox and the thin form of Pitt might have been seen in the street; when Alvanley and Petersham splashed its mud, or Brummell and the Regent cut one another on its pavement; when D'Orsay's waistcoats and Wellington's nose were familiar to its *habitués*, and the Victorian era, with its poke-bonnets and crinolines, its peg-top trousers and high-lows, had replaced the hoops and patches, the swords and wigs and silk stockings of an earlier day. Of these things, the shop-front of Messrs Lock, hatters, is one; the little turning known as Pickering Place is another; but the chief is, of course, the Tudor front of the Palace, which, altered as it has been, is yet essentially the front that looked down on Charles and Rochester and Sedley, on Queen Anne and her Augustan age, on the Georges and their varied courts, on the young Queen who was to give her name to a longer, a greater and a more marvellous age than had any of her predecessors.

St James's Palace does not come within the scope of this book. Its history has been already adequately written. Its name has for four centuries stood for the pomp and circumstance of our sovereignty. If its stones could speak they would hold us entranced. From the days of the burly Tudor downwards the Court of St James's has been represented by that picturesque pile of brick-work. One or two sights specially connected with St James's Street it could discourse on. It has seen cannon placed on the eminence opposite, when Wyatt's rebellion threatened Queen Mary's throne, and Lord Clinton stood in what is now St James's Street, with his troops ready to guard the royal residence. Agnes Strickland thus records the fact: "On the hill opposite the Palace gateway was planted a battery of cannon, guarded by a strong squadron of horse, headed by Lord Clinton. This force extended from the spot where Crockford's club-house now stands and Jermyn Street . . . no building occupied at that time the vicinity of the Palace excepting a solitary conduit standing where the centre of St James's Square is at present. The whole area before the gateway was called St James's Fields."

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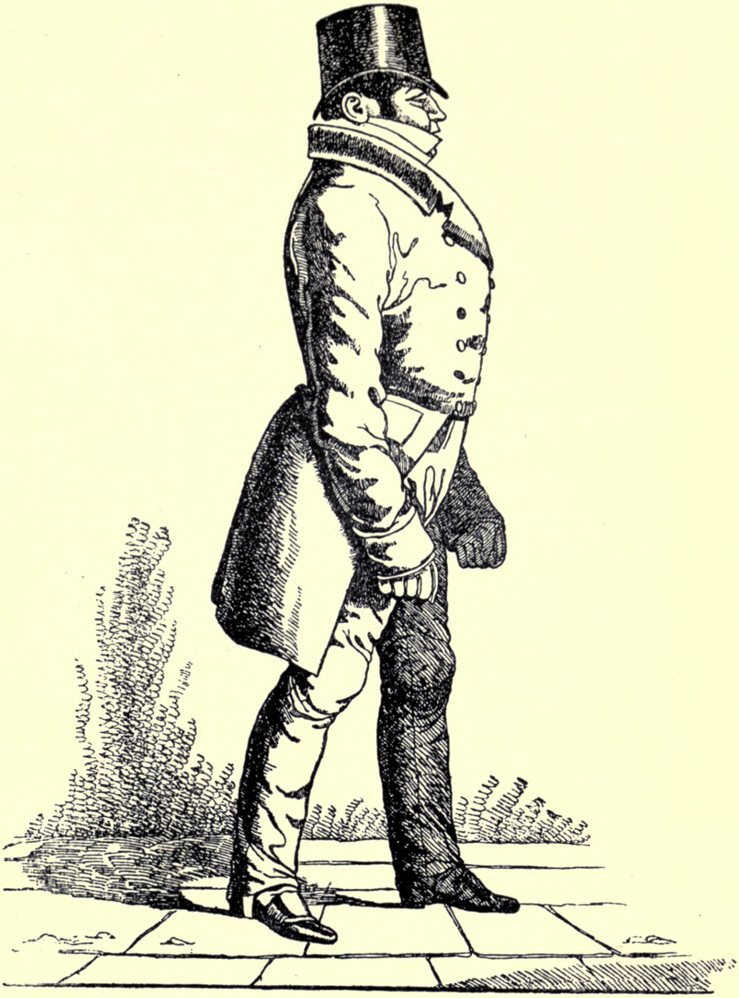
[1] *English Humourists.*

From this attempt on the royal power let us turn to an attempt on the liberty of a great noble. Surely St James's Street, with all its memories, has hardly witnessed a more incredible incident than that related by Carte, whose version I transcribe verbatim.

"The Prince of Orange," he writes, "came this year (1670) into England, and being invited, on 6th December, to an entertainment in the city of London, his Grace (the Duke of Ormond) attended him thither. As he was returning homewards on a dark night, and going up St James's Street, at the end of which, facing the Palace, stood Clarendon House, where he then lived, he was attacked by Blood and five of his accomplices. The Duke always used to go attended with six footmen. . . . These six footmen used to walk three on each side of the street over against the coach; but, by some contrivance or other, they were all stopped and out of the way when the Duke was taken out of his coach by Blood and his son, and mounted on horseback behind one of the horsemen in his company. The coachman drove on to Clarendon House and told the porter that the Duke had been seized by two men, who had carried him down Piccadilly. The porter immediately ran that way, and Mr James Clarke, chancing to be at that time in the court of the house, followed with all possible haste, having first alarmed the family, and ordered the servants to come after him as fast as they could. Blood, it seems, either to gratify the humour of his patron, who had set him upon this work, or to glut his own revenge by putting his Grace to the same ignominious death which his accomplices in the treasonable design upon Dublin Castle had suffered, had taken a strong fancy into his head to hang the Duke at Tyburn. Nothing could have saved his Grace's life but the extravagant imagination and passion of the villain, who, leaving the Duke mounted and buckled to one of his comrades, rode on before, and (as is said) actually tied a rope to the gallows, and then rode back to see what was become of his accomplices, whom he met riding off in a great hurry. The horseman to whom the Duke was tied was a person of great strength; but, being embarrassed by his Grace's struggling, could not advance as fast as he desired. He was, however, got a good way beyond Berkeley (now Devonshire) House, towards Knightsbridge, when the Duke, having got his foot under the man's, unhorsed him, and they both fell down together in the mud, where they were struggling when the porter and Mr Clarke came up. . . . The King, when he heard of this intended assassination of the Duke of Ormond, expressed a great resentment on that occasion, and issued out a proclamation for the discovery and apprehension of the miscreants concerned in the attempt.'

After this, other St James's Street incidents seem almost commonplace; the arrest of an ambassador for debt is insignificant compared with the attempted murder of a great noble, but such a sight has been witnessed here, for Prince Metreof, the Russian envoy, after attending the Queen's levée on 27th July 1707, and taking formal leave of her on being recalled to his own country, was arrested in St James's Street, on the writ of a Mr Morton, laceman of Covent Garden, and was carried off, with much indignity, to a sponging-house.

If the attack on the Duke of Ormond cannot be exactly paralleled, a not altogether dissimilar circumstance once occurred in St James's Street to no less a person than the younger Pitt some hundred and odd years later. Pitt had been made Prime Minister in December 1783, on the dismissal of the Coalition Government, and in the following February the Corporation sent a deputation to him, to his brother's house in Berkeley Square, in order to bestow on him the Freedom of the City. After this ceremony the whole party returned to the city, where Pitt was engaged to dine at the Grocers' Hall. The progress to and, later, from the city was one continual triumph, but the Opposition party—"The Friends of the People," as they styled themselves—were wrought to a state of fury. It thus happened that when, late at night, a crowd of artisans was dragging the coach in which sat Pitt, Lord Chatham, and Lord Mahon, up St James's Street, and the procession had arrived before the Whig stronghold—Brooks's club-house—the vehicle was suddenly attacked by a determined band of ruffians, including, it is said, some members of the club itself, armed with sticks and bludgeons. Some of the rioters, making their way to the carriage, forced open the doors, and actually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Going to WHITES.

LORD ALVANLEY.

After a drawing by Dighton

aimed blows at the Prime Minister, which were with difficulty warded off by his companions. The servants were much mauled, the carriage demolished, and only with difficulty could Pitt, Chatham, and Mahon reach the shelter of White's:

> "See the sad sequel of the Grocers' treat,
> Behold him darting up St James's Street,
> Pelted and scared by Brooks's hellish sprites,
> And vainly fluttering round the door of White's."[1]

Since those days St James's Street has seen many a notable event, many a gorgeous pageant—proclamations before the Palace gateway, Jubilee processions, royal wedding festivities, the return of famous leaders from successful campaigns, the departure of troops to uphold the honour of the flag in distant lands. The thoroughfare is linked up with the history of the country by its proximity to the royal Palace no less than by those centres of political activity which find their homes within it.

But with all its great memories, one or two incidents seem to stand out—Fox gaily chatting while his home was being rifled; the great lexicographer solemnly choosing shoe-buckles, with, no doubt, the little Scotsman in attendance; Byron awaking and finding himself famous, and Byron again, friendless and alone, going to take his seat in a regardless House of Lords.

You may people St James's Street with the great men and women of three centuries by the help of the memoirs and diaries which record their doings; you may even reconstruct its architectural outlines by the help of plans and elevations; with Gwynn you may imagine a royal palace extending practically along the whole west side and cutting into the present Palace, leaving nothing remaining but its picturesque and historic gateway.[1]

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[1] *The Rolliad*, ii. 125.

But, after all, the street's most outstanding memories are those connected with the spacious days of the Regency; with the Prince receiving his famous "cut" from Brummell; with Brummell repaying a debt by giving his arm to his creditor from Brooks's to White's; with Lord Sefton on his way to the latter club, as portrayed by Deighton, or with Theodore Hook walking with squinting Mr Manners Sutton, and forming the subject of the sketch which the famous H. B. entitled *Hook and Eye.*[2]

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[1] See Gwynn's *London and Westminster Improved,* where the suggestion is made and a plan of the proposed alteration given.

[2] Among innumerable other notable people of more recent days who have lodged temporarily in St James's Street mention may be made of Abraham Hayward and George Meredith; while I find Isaac Disraeli dating a letter to Lady Blessington from 1 St James's Place, on 5th February 1838.

PART II

THE ANNALS OF ALMACK'S

I

EARLY HISTORY OF ALMACK'S

WHEN the lines of demarcation separated Society in a far more arbitrary manner than is the case to-day, some common ground on which the sexes might meet became almost a necessity, and the protagonist was forthcoming in a Heidegger or a Cornelys, who administered to the wants in this direction of those who were unwilling or unable to provide them in their own more restricted surroundings.

What Nash did at Bath could surely be as easily accomplished in London, and forthwith Soho Square resounded to the strains of music and the laughter and chatter of an idle throng—idle only in one sense of the word, for such assemblies always had one dominant underlying feature: they formed a matrimonial market, where buyers and sellers were as eager, and sometimes the merchandise as unsuspecting and as passive, as in any other centre of commercial traffic.

I say *one* underlying feature; I should have said several, for whereas the sellers generally had a single object in view, the buyers often had many—it might be desire to kill time, to do nothing worse than gossip and talk scandal, but more frequently it was to enter into those intrigues by the number of which and his success in them a fine gentleman of the period gained that notoriety which was then so often mistaken for celebrity.

Under such conditions it is not difficult to see that balls and masquerades like those which Madame Cornelys and others of lesser note organised were doomed, sooner or later, to degenerate into assemblies at which the decent found themselves out of place, and even the lax had sometimes occasion to raise their eyebrows. But with the advent of the "Farmer King," manners and customs gradually took on a more sober tone, at least outwardly, and things began to be ordered somewhat more decently than before; for if intrigues were indulged in as frequently, they were not carried on so openly as in earlier days.

At this time Madame Cornelys—"The Heidegger of the age," as Horace Walpole calls her—had been carrying on her establishment at Carlisle House, in Soho Square, for about ten years, and the masquerades held under her auspices had become notable for their indecency and "mockery of solemn feelings and principles"; but notwithstanding the complaints of bishops, and the opposition of rival establishments, the egregious mistress of the ceremonies continued to fill her rooms and her pockets.

But there were signs of storms ahead, and one of the first to see that profit might be made out of a rival establishment that should be decent and select, as that in Soho had never really been, was one Macall,[1] a Scotsman, who, to hide his origin and perhaps also to disarm the prejudice which Lord Bute's unpopularity had done much to foster against his countrymen, had inverted his name to Almack, when, in 1763, he started the club in St James's Street, which was originally known as Almack's, but in latter days became the better known Brooks's.

I am not prepared to say that William Almack ever set up as a regenerator of manners; indeed, the club he founded soon won such a character for unbounded gambling, "worthy the decline of our Empire," according

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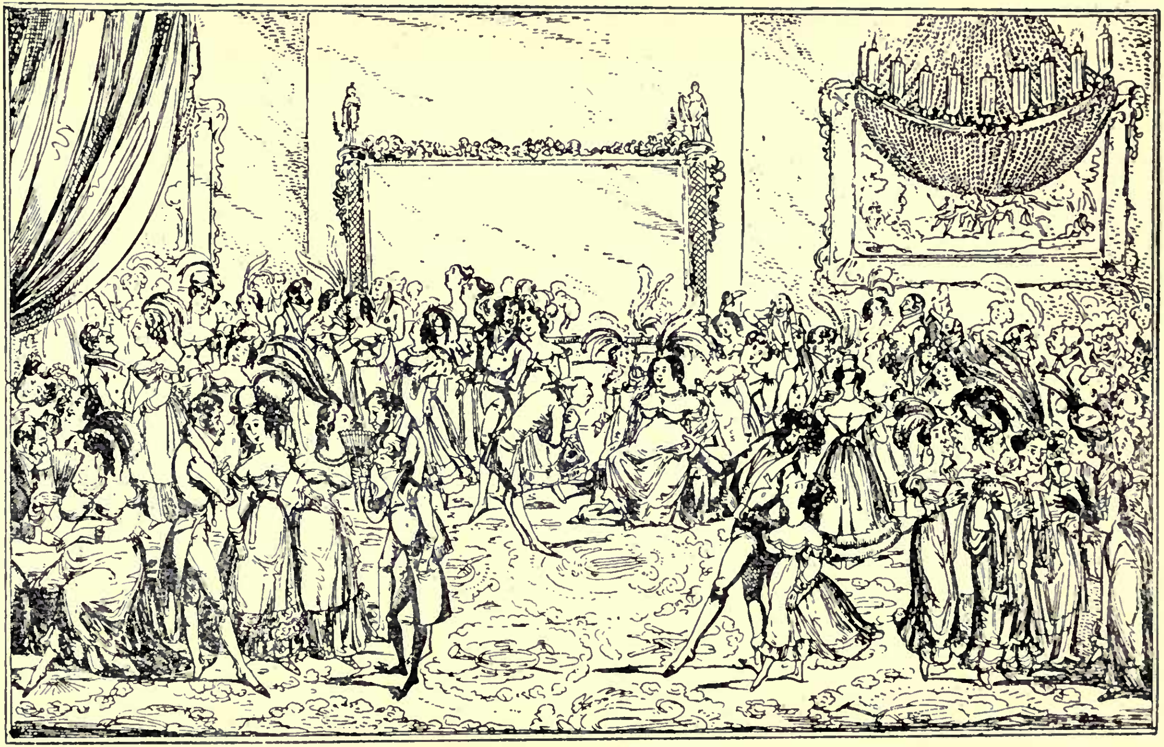
[1] He had married a lady's maid of the Duchess of Hamilton, and it was the Duke of that name who advised him to call himself Almack.



BALL AT ALMACKS

After R. Cruikshank

to Walpole, that such an assertion would be a contradiction in terms; but there is no doubt that he saw that the day had come when decorum and exclusiveness were more likely to pay than a further development (if that were possible) of impropriety. His club had been opened under the auspices of such great and influential ones as the Dukes of Roxburghe and Portland, Lord Strathmore, Mr Crewe, and Charles James Fox, and with such powerful supporters he thought rightly that he could count on the co-operation of the then limited great world in his new venture.

He selected the site of his Assembly Rooms well. King Street, St James's, is, as all the world knows, the link between London's most fashionable street[1] and its most aristocratic square; it is within calling distance of Pall Mall, which had then a royal palace on each hand, and in the very centre of club-land.

In the sixties of the eighteenth century it was still more the heart of fashion's particular region than it is to-day, when Mayfair more than vies with St James's, and Marylebone almost vies with both.

The spot chosen by Almack was that immediately to the east of Pall Mall Place,[2] and in 1764 the erection of his "rooms" was begun, Robert Mylne being the builder.

Mrs Harris, writing to her son, afterwards Earl of Malmesbury, on 5th April 1764, refers to the erection of the buildings: "Almack is going to build most magnificent rooms behind his house,[3] one much larger than at Carlisle House."

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[1] I may remind the reader that not till 1830 was the street carried through to St James's Street; before then only a narrow court gave access to it, which must have caused great inconvenience to carriages setting down at Almack's.

[2] Attached to the original lease is a ground plan of the property acquired by Almack.

[3] Referring to Almack's Club in Pall Mall. The Marlborough Club now occupies its site.

There is no doubt that the project made some stir at the time, especially among the fashionable world, which was more or less dependent on Carlisle House for at least its indoor amusements; and the mistress of that establishment viewed with some apprehension the rising of this new star; indeed, we find Walpole writing, on 16th December 1764, and stating that "Mrs Cornelys, apprehending the future assembly at Almack's, has enlarged her vast room, and hung it with blue satin, and another with yellow satin"; "but," he adds, "Almack's room, which is to be 90 feet long, proposes to swallow up both hers, as easily as Moses's rod gobbled down those of the magicians'."

It was quite obvious that there would be a severe contest for supremacy between the rival assembly rooms, Mrs Cornelys relying on her already established vogue, and also on the various improvements she from time to time carried out, and, above all, on the influence of her clientèle, who, perhaps, were not averse from the licence she permitted; Almack, on the other hand, looking to the novelty of his venture, its more central situation, and the disgust of many at the mixed nature of the assemblies in Soho Square, to enable him to compete successfully with them.

The Scotsman also evolved another masterly stroke of policy: his rooms were to be under the management of a committee of ladies of high rank, and the only possible way of gaining admission to them was to be by vouchers or by personal introduction. This was, indeed, to kill two birds with one stone, for it not only gave some of the most influential members of the *ton* a personal and almost despotic influence in the management, but it also furnished an added zest when it was recognised that the difficulty of admittance was only to be equalled by the *kudos* to be gained by being admitted.

At length Almack's new building was opened, on 12th February 1765, but, in spite of the presence of a royal Duke, not under the most promising conditions. Horace Walpole's account of the event, contained in a letter to Lord Hertford, is dated two days later:

"The new Assembly Room at Almack's was opened the night before last, and they say is very magnificent, but it was empty; half the town is ill with colds and many were afraid to go, as the house is scarcely built yet. Almack advertised that it was built with hot bricks and boiling water: think what a rage there must be for public places if this notice, instead of terrifying, could draw everybody thither. They tell me the ceilings were dripping with wet; but can you believe me when I assure you that the Duke of Cumberland was there? nay, had a levée in the morning and went to the Opera before the Assembly. There is a vast flight of steps, and he was forced to rest two or three times.[1] When he dies of it—and how should he not?—it will sound very silly, when Hercules or Theseus ask him what he died of, to reply, 'I caught my death on a damp staircase at a new club-room.'"

In this letter further details are given with regard to the rooms, which consisted of "three very elegant" ones. The subscription was ten guineas, "for which you have a ball and supper once a week for twelve weeks." "You may imagine," continues the writer, "by the sum, the company is chosen; though, refined as it is, it will be scarce able to put old Soho out of countenance. The men's tickets are not transferable, so, if the ladies do not like us, they have no opportunity of changing us, but must see the same persons for ever."

Notwithstanding such fears, the place "caught on," as we should now express it, from the very first, and Gilly

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[1] Jesse's *Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, vol. i., p. 360.

Williams, in a subsequent letter to his friend, written in the following March, thus records its progress:

"Our female Almack's flourishes beyond description. If you had such a thing at Paris, you would fill half a quire of flourished paper with the description of it. Almack's Scotch face, in a bag-wig, waiting at supper, would divert you, as would his lady in a sack, making tea and curtseying to the duchesses."

The Assembly Rooms, once set going, were not long in getting firmly established. The letters of the period are the best criterion of this, and the writers wax eloquent over the entertainments, and set down, with evident unction, the names and titles of those who graced Almack's assemblies.

Thus Selwyn, writing to Lord Carlisle on 15th January 1768, gives us this vignette: "Almack's was last night very full; Lady Anne and Lady Betty were there with Lady Carlisle. The Duke of Cumberland sat between Lady Betty and Lady Sarah, who was his partner. Lady Sarah, your sister, and His R(oyal) H(ighness) did nothing but dance cotillons in the new blue damask room, which by the way was intended for cards. The Duchess of Gordon made her first appearance there, who is very handsome; so the beauty of the former night, Lady Almeria Carpenter, was the less regarded."

This extract is of particular interest, for besides informing us that Almack had already found it necessary to enlarge his rooms by the addition of a "blue damask room," thus indicating increased patronage, it introduces us to some of those who shed lustre and "rained influence" there.

The Ladies Anne and Betty were Lord Carlisle's sisters, the Lady Carlisle being his mother, who was the daughter of that 4th Lord Byron whose duel with Mr Chaworth, and subsequent trial, in 1765, formed one of the sensations of the day.

The Duke of Cumberland is not, of course, to be confounded with the "Butcher of Culloden," whom we have seen "assisting" at the opening of Almack's. This Duke was that notoriously dissipated brother of George III. who, "though not tall, did not want beauty," as Walpole says, and who married, in 1771, Mrs Horton, much to the disgust of his royal relative. Here we find him "dancing cotillons" with "Lady Sarah," who was no other than the celebrated Lady Sarah Lennox, for whom his Majesty had a *tendre*, and whom, had he had a will of his own then, he would have made his Queen. Others were in love with that beautiful creature, Selwyn's friend and correspondent, Lord Carlisle, among them; but the lady who might have shared a throne consoled herself with a baronet, Sir Charles Bunbury, chiefly notable for his racing proclivities, from whom she was divorced in 1776.[1]

The Duchess of Gordon, whom Walpole called "one of the empresses of fashion," was one of Pitt's few intimate friends, and stood to the Tory Party in somewhat the same relation as the Duchess of Devonshire did to the Whigs. Famous for her beauty, she seems, in Selwyn's eyes at least, to have eclipsed another lovely woman, Lady Almeria Carpenter, who, like Lady Suffolk at an earlier date, combined the functions of lady-in-waiting to a royal lady (in this case the Duchess of Gloucester) with those of mistress to that lady's lawful lord!

In the following month Selwyn has again a reference to Almack's,[2] when he writes that: "Lady S(arah) is in town, and I suppose very happy with the thoughts of a mascarade which we are to have at Almack's next Monday sevennight, unless in the interim some violent opposition comes from the Bishops."

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[1] She afterwards married George Napier, and was the mother of Sir Charles, Sir George, and Sir William Napier, all notable men in their day.

[2] His references to the club of the same name are, of course, innumerable.

The last paragraph was but too prophetic; the hierarchy were unpropitious, and ten days later Selwyn informs Carlisle that "the Bishops have, as I apprehended that they would, put a stop to our masquerade, for which I am sorry, principally upon Lady Sarah's account. I shall go this morning and condole with her upon it."

It will be remembered that a few years later the bishops opposed a similar entertainment at Carlisle House, and the Bishop of London even remonstrated with the King, but Mrs Cornelys was apparently less sensitive to ecclesiastical and royal displeasure than Almack, and *her* masquerade was held, when lo! the wives of four of the bishops were present!

Although the later development of Almack's, or perhaps one should say its restriction, to an assembly room for dances of the most select kind has given its very name a merely Terpsichorean signification, it must be remembered that during its earlier days it was besides this really a sort of ladies' club,[1] such as are nowadays common enough. Indeed, the two things were coterminous, at least for a time; and while cotillons were being danced in the great room, money was being gambled away in other parts of the building with an energy that might have even surprised Crockford's, and a constancy that was hardly surpassed at White's.

Mrs Boscawen once wrote to her friend, Mrs Delany, a somewhat minute account of the *modus vivendi* here:

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[1] Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was anxious to become a member of Almack's, is found attending the Ladies' Club there in 1771, where nearly all the *habituées* were at one time or another his sitters.

"The female club I told you of is removed from their quarters," she says, "Lady Pembroke objecting to a tavern; it meets, therefore, for the present at certain rooms of Almack's, who for another year is to provide a private house. . . . The first fourteen who imagined and planned it settled its rules and *constitutions.* These were formed upon the model of one of the clubs at Almack's. There are seventy-five chosen (the whole number is to be two hundred). The ladies nominate and choose the gentlemen and *vice versa*, so that no lady can exclude a lady, or gentleman a gentleman! The Duchess of Bedford was at first blackballed, but is since admitted. Duchess of Grafton and of Marlborough are also chosen. Lady Hertford wrote to beg admittance and has obtained it; also Lady Holderness, Lady Rochford are blackballed, as is Lord March, Mr Boothby, and one or two more who think themselves pretty gentlemen *du premier ordre*, but it is plain the ladies are not of their opinion. Lady Molineux has accepted, but the Duchess of Beaufort has declined, *as her health never permits her to sup abroad.* When any of the ladies dine with the Society they are to send word before, but supper comes of course, and is to be served always at eleven. Play will be deep and *constant* probably."

The Duchess of Bedford, against whom someone apparently had a grievance, was the second wife of the 4th Duke—"the little Duke," Walpole calls him—and before her marriage, Lady Gertrude Leveson-Gower, daughter of John, Earl Gower. One wonders if the cause of her Grace's rejection when she was first proposed had anything to do with her connection with the marriage of the Duke of Marlborough and Lady Caroline Russell. We certainly know, from Lord Holland's reminiscences,[1] that she used all sorts of "*mean and unbecoming artifices*

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[1] *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox*, vol. i., p. 72.

to bring this match on, and which she had so little pride as to use in publick too, exposing herself to the ridicule of the whole world," and also that the Duke saw through them and "spoke to her Grace always with the utmost scorn and derision, sometimes with detestation." Perhaps his Grace did not care about meeting his mother-in-law oftener than need be, and so endeavoured to compass her exclusion, especially as his wife was one of the first members of the Society!

The Duchess of Grafton was the first wife of the 3rd Duke, but was divorced from him in 1769; before her marriage she had been the Hon. Anne Liddell, daughter and heiress of Henry, Lord Ravensworth. Lady Sarah Bunbury calls her "one of the coarsest brown women" she ever knew, and informs Lady Susan O'Brien that on their divorce the Duke allowed her £3000 a year, and that they put it about, as the reason for their parting, that "their tempers don't suit." The Duchess afterwards married the Earl of Upper Ossory, an intrigue with whom was the real cause of the divorce. Three days after this event she was legally joined to her lover, and the story goes that the day before the Bill for the Divorce was passed in the House of Lords she wrote a letter which she signed "Anne Grafton"; added to it the next day, and to this postscript appended her old signature of Anne Liddell; but did not send off the letter till she had again become a wife, when she concluded it with her new name, "Anne Ossory"; a circumstance which gave rise to the well-known lines:

"No grace but Grafton's grace so soon,
So strangely could convert a sinner;
Duchess at morn and Miss at noon,
And Upper Ossory after dinner."

Lady Ossory was, as all the world knows, one of Walpole's correspondents; Lady Hertford was another of his friends, being the wife of his kinsman, the 1st Earl of Hertford. As she was the daughter of the 2nd Duke of Grafton, she was aunt of the 3rd Duke,[1] about whose Duchess's eccentricities we have just been reading.

Lady Holderness, wife of the 4th Earl, was a foreigner, being the daughter of Sieur Doublet, a Dutch nobleman; while Lady Rochford was the wife of the 4th Earl of Rochford, and the Duchess of Beaufort, the daughter of John Syme Berkeley, and sister and heiress of Baron Botetourt, through whom this title came to the Somerset family, she having married the 4th Duke of Beaufort in 1740.

So much for the noble ladies who first held the destinies of Almack's in their hands.

The Lord March who was blackballed was the afterwards notorious "Old Q," and Mr Boothby, who experienced a similar fate, was a member of Almack's *Club*, where, as Selwyn once put it, he used to lose his £300 a night regularly!

Notwithstanding the patronage of half the nobility, Almack was not above recognising the uses of advertisement, and thus we find one of his perennial notices in *The Advertiser* of 12th November 1768, as follows:—

"Mr Almack humbly begs leave to acquaint the nobility and gentry, subscribers to the Assembly in King Street, St James's, that the first meeting will be Thursday, 24th inst. *N.B.*—Tickets are ready to be delivered at the Assembly Room."

Two years later Horace Walpole, writing to George Montagu, refers to the female club established here as distinct from the assemblies for dancing with which the name of Almack's is chiefly associated. "There is a new Institution that begins to make, and if it proceeds will make, considerable noise," he says. "It is a club of both sexes to be erected at Almack's, on the model of that of the men at White's. Mrs Fitzroy, Lady Pembroke, Mrs Meynell, Lady Molyneux, Miss Pelham and Miss Lloyd are the foundresses. I am ashamed to say I am of so young and fashionable society; but as they are people I live with, I choose to be idle rather than morose. I can go to a young supper without forgetting how much sand is run out of the hour-glass."

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[1] He was grandson of the 2nd Duke.

Horace was nothing if not "fashionable," and never so much so as when he affects to disdain the usages of the *monde*, and winds up an account of his gay doings with some truly Horatian moralisings; and here we find him a little ashamed of his frolics, but excusing himself on the plea that those with whom he revels are those with whom he lives, quite in the Walpolian manner.

As Almack's, when first started, had threatened to extinguish Mrs Cornelys' entertainments, so both these rivals were destined to receive a severe blow at the hands of a common enemy, in the shape of The Pantheon, which was opened in Oxford Street, in 1772, and formed the chief social sensation of that year. Its proportions far exceeded those of the establishments in St James's or Soho. There were, indeed, no less than fourteen rooms, not including the Rotunda, and at the opening on 27th January it is estimated that there were two thousand persons gathered together within its walls. No wonder Walpole called it "a winter Ranelagh." Mrs Delany, describing it from hearsay at the time of its opening, records that "the lighting and the brilliant éclat on going in was beyond all description, and the going in and out made so easy by lanes of constables that there was not the least confusion."

The Pantheon was burnt down just twenty years after it had been inaugurated, and though it was rebuilt some years later, its subsequent uses were of a varied kind and such as not greatly to interfere with Almack's. There is no doubt, however, that during the time of its prosperity it formed a very serious rival to the older establishment, and although the latter continued to attract a certain select (if I may use the word in this connection) few, yet the larger area, more elaborate decorations and lighting, and, above all, the novelty of the winter Ranelagh, made it a very formidable rival.

But the early years of the new century were to witness a recrudescence of Almack's popularity; and, indeed, it was to enter on a more prosperous period than it had ever before enjoyed.

II

ALMACK'S IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In this second phase of Almack's history that portion of its constitution which has been referred to as the female club gradually died out, as did the extensive gambling that had become associated with it, and the rooms soon came to be entirely given over to dances and assemblies.

One characteristic, however, clung to Almack's, notwithstanding these altered conditions: perhaps because of them it was, if possible, more select, more closely guarded, more *haut ton* than ever before, and in the history of despotism a chapter on the uncompromising nature of its rules and the autocratic bearing of its patronesses might not inaptly find a place.

The lady patronesses of Almack's during the second great phase of its ascendancy, as, in a lesser degree, during its first burst of prosperity, carried matters—to say with a high hand seems almost inadequate—shall I write, with a clenched fist?

The laws of the Medes and Persians found themselves figuring in a great nineteenth-century revival, and it is safe to say that no personal authority, no special endowments, no wealth or influence, outside the magic circle, could avail if those who possessed these attributes attempted to break through the iron-bound rules of Almack's. The memoirs and letters of the period are full of references to the rooms in King Street and to those who ruled over their destinies; but of all these authorities Captain Gronow is the most circumstantial, and, inasmuch as he was both in and of the world he writes about, the most reliable. Let us see what he has to say of these matters in the year of grace 1814.

"At the present time," he writes, "one can hardly conceive the importance which was attached to getting admission to Almack's, the seventh heaven of the fashionable world"; and he adds that only a paltry half-dozen of the Guards' officers, out of some three hundred, "were *honoured* with vouchers of admission to this exclusive temple."

What heart-burnings,[1] what impotent rage, "what wild ecstasy" of fury, must have alternated in the breasts of those *peris* shut out from the paradise of Almack's.

"Many diplomatic arts, much finesse and a host of intrigues were set in motion to get an invitation," says Gronow, continuing the wondrous tale, and there was no chance here of emulating the daring impudence of Brummell, who once appeared at an evening party uninvited, but safe in the knowledge that the host and hostess were not on speaking terms and would each suppose that the other had asked him. No; here the two-handed engine at the door, in the shape of a lynx-eyed Cerberus in livery, would permit of no one entering without the cardboard sop! And not only were those who had no ticket excluded; matters of dress regulation were as strictly enforced as at a State function.

The Duke of Wellington, then probably the most popular, as he certainly was the greatest, man in England, once appeared at those portals armed with voucher and all necessary credentials, but, horrible to relate, in trousers instead of knee-breeches—in black trousers, which had been strictly forbidden by the committee sitting in solemn conclave! Whereupon he in authority: "Your Grace cannot be admitted in trousers," and the Duke, "who had a great respect for orders and regulations," turned away, probably with a grim smile playing at the corners of his firm mouth.

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[1] The Hon. Grantley Berkeley says this "female oligarchy was less in number, but equal in power to the Venetian Council of Ten."

It reminds one of the horror of the Court Chamberlain who discovered Dumouriez almost on the verge of entering the royal presence with bows instead of buckles to his shoes!

No wonder a contemporary observer[1] could write that "At Almack's, in 1814, the rules were very strict"; while a contributor to *The New Monthly Magazine*, for ten years later, remarks, after mentioning that the nights of meeting were confined to every Wednesday during the season: "This is selection with a vengeance, the very quintessence of aristocracy. Three-fourths of the nobility knock in vain for admission. Into this *sanctum sanctorum*, of course, the sons of commerce never think of entering on the sacred Wednesday evenings."

At this period, however, a certain laxity began to be observable, for from the same source we learn that "Into this very 'blue chamber,' in the absence of the six necromancers (*i.e.* the lady patronesses), have the votaries of trade contrived to intrude themselves."

But we are not yet concerned with the gradual decadence of Almack's; at the period to which we are just now casting back our gaze it was at the very summit of its power and exclusiveness. Let us turn once again to Gronow for a confirmation of this:

"Very often persons whose rank and fortunes entitled them to the *entrée* anywhere were excluded by the cliquism of the lady patronesses," says he, "for the female government of Almack's was a pure despotism and subject to all the caprices of despotic rule. It is needless to add that, like every other despotism, it was not innocent of abuses."

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[1] Lady Clementina Davies, in her *Recollections of Society*.

That was just it: its strength and its weakness lay equally in the unassailable character of its decrees; it was a *Veremgericht* from which there was no appeal; and those who directed its destinies would have been somewhat more than human had they been able to eliminate from their verdicts all trace of partiality. It was so easy to make their position a vehicle for personal recrimination; and it says something for the inherent good nature of the patronesses that no flagrant case of petty tyranny seems ever to have been brought home to them.

Who were those who exercised this despotic power? What, beyond the *kudos* of being of it, were the attractions in this nineteenth-century Hall of Eblis?

In the year 1814 the lady patronesses were Lady Castlereagh and Princess Esterhazy, Lady Cowper and Lady Jersey, Mrs Drummond Burrell, afterwards Lady Willoughby de Eresby, Lady Sefton and the Countess, later Princess, Lieven.

I shall have more to say about these *grandes dames* in the following chapter, but I may note here that, according to Gronow, the most popular of them was Lady Cowper, who afterwards became Lady Palmerston; that Lady Jersey sometimes made herself "simply ridiculous" with her tragedy-queen airs and was not infrequently ill-bred in her manners; that Lady Sefton was kind and the Countess Lieven haughty; and that Lady Castlereagh and Mrs Drummond Burrell were altogether too *grandes dames* to be anything but picturesque and exclusive figureheads.

If we glance for a moment at the "internal economy" of the rooms we shall find that at first the amusements were what would now be regarded as painfully insular, so far, at least, as the Terpsichorean art was concerned, the dances being confined to Scotch reels and what Gronow calls "the old English country dance," which by the by, is merely a rendering of the French *contredanse*, and had nothing essentially bucolic about it; these dances being under the direction of the famous Neil Gow,[1] the Scottish violinist.

It was not long, however, before a change took place in this respect. In 1815, a year famous, it may be remembered, for other things, Lady Jersey, returning from Paris, brought with her the "quadrille." This was an event indeed, and Gronow, full of enthusiasm for the dance which, as he rightly says, "so long remained popular," gives the names of those who took part in the first one ever executed in England.

Of course Lady Jersey was one of the protagonists, and she was supported by Lady Susan Ryder, Miss Montgomery and Lady Harriet Butler; while the men engaged in the contest were the Count St Aldegonde (whose name always sounds as if it had been culled from one of Disraeli's novels), Mr Montagu, Mr Montgomery[2] and Mr Charles Standish.

Although Gronow is thus specific in recording the names of those who, according to him, danced the *very first* quadrille in this country, yet in the volume in which he makes this statement is given an illustration, taken from a French print, which is supposed to represent Lady Jersey, Lady Worcester, Lord Worcester and Clanronald Macdonald[3] "dancing the first quadrille" there!

If the advent of the "quadrille" was an incident, that of the waltz was an event. Byron has sung the dance, as we all know, and what he says of it makes us the less to wonder when Gronow affirms that "there were comparatively few who at first ventured to whirl round the salons of Almack's."

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[1] Born at Inver, Perthshire, 22nd March 1725, and died there 1st March 1807.

[2] One of the stewards of Almack's, and a member of the *coterie* of the Dandies.

[3] Macdonald of Clanronald married a daughter of Lord Mount Edgecumbe, in 1812, and was thus brother-in-law of Lady Brownlow, whose *Reminiscences of a Septuagenarian* appeared in 1867.

But use reconciles; and indeed there were, at least in the earlier methods of dancing it, other things that easily reconciled.

When the first blush of strangeness had passed away, the waltz became *the* thing, and one of the earliest to be seen "describing infinite circles" round the great room at Almack's was "that laughing philosopher, gallant and gay," Lord Palmerston, with the haughty Princess Lieven in his arms. Others followed, and, according to Gronow, "Baron de Neumann was frequently seen perpetually turning with the Princess Esterhazy; and, in course of time, the waltzing mania, having turned the heads of Society generally, descended to their feet, and the waltz was practised in the morning in certain noble mansions in London with unparalleled assiduity."

Raikes[1] is eloquent on the introduction of the waltz in this country, which, by the by, he places two years earlier than Gronow. "What scenes have we witnessed in those days at Almack's," writes he. "What fear and trembling in the *dêbutantes* at the commencement of a waltz, what giddiness and confusion at the end!"[2]

The ingenuous diarist opines that it was probably the latter circumstance which accounted for the violent opposition that soon arose against the measure; but readers of Byron and of Sheridan's well-known lines will be ready to account for this antagonism by another cause.

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[1] *Diary*, vol. ii., p. 240.

[2] As with the quadrille, so with the waltz, there is some discrepancy between the various dates given of its introduction: thus, according to the volume on *Dancing* in the Badminton Library, the introducer was Princess Lieven in 1816, whereas Raikes gives it as 1813, and Gronow *about* 1815. Anyhow, it seems certain that the credit of its introduction was due to the Princess Lieven.

There is no doubt that many considered it altogether immoral; "the anti-waltzing party took the alarm, cried it down; mothers forbade it; and every ballroom became the scene of feud and contention."

Baron Tripp, a great dancer, Baron de Neumann, Count St Aldegonde, and others, persevered in spite of all the prejudices which were marshalled against them: "Every night the waltz was called, and new votaries, though slowly, were added to their train." Another great supporter of the dance was M. Bourblanc, whose tragic fate I shall have to relate in another place, when I shall have something more particular to say about the individual celebrities who graced from time to time the floors of Almack's.

One can perhaps understand that the waltz was likely, at its first introduction, to find some disfavour amongst those who had been brought up on more stately measures; but the author of a work on the Court of George IV. falls foul of the quadrille, than which one is accustomed to consider no dance more decent, and few, if the truth must be confessed, more dreary. Here is what the writer has to say on the subject: "We had much waltzing and quadrilling, the last of which is certainly very abominable. I am not prude enough to be offended with waltzing, in which I can see no other harm than that it disorders the stomach, and sometimes makes people look very ridiculous; but, after all, moralists, with the Duchess of Gordon at their head, who never had a moral in her life, exclaim dreadfully against it. Nay, I am told that these magical wheelings have already roused poor Lord Dartmouth from his grave to suppress them. Alas! after all, people set about it as gravely as a company of dervishes, and seem to be paying adoration to Pluto rather than to Cupid. But the quadrilles I can by no means endure; for till ladies and gentlemen have joints at their ankles, which is impossible, it is worse than impudent to make such exhibitions. . . . When people dance to be looked at, they surely should dance to perfection." So, after all, this rather ungrammatical tirade is not against the morals of the dance, but apparently against the difficulty experienced of figuring gracefully in it.

But opposition to either waltz or quadrille was hopeless, and, according to Raikes, "Flahault, who was *la fleur des pois* in Paris, came over to captivate Miss Mercer, and, with a host of others, drove the prudes from their entrenchments; and when the Emperor Alexander was seen waltzing round the rooms at Almack's, with his tight uniform[1] and numerous decorations, they surrendered at discretion."

Lord William Pitt Lennox tells us whom were considered about this time the chief exponents of the new dances, and among the names he gives are those of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, who afterwards became the husband of the Princess Charlotte and subsequently Leopold I., King of the Belgians; Prince Esterhazy, the Dukes of Beaufort and Devonshire, Count D'Orsay and Lords Londonderry, Anglesey and Donegall; and many of these availed themselves of the instructions of the numerous *maîtres de danse* who came over in the wake of the influential foreigners who had helped to popularise the waltz and the quadrille in this country.

But the dances at Almack's did not always go off without mishap, and the industrious Gronow records at least one occasion on which an untoward event happened. Lord Graves, notable for his size as well as for the general excellence of his dancing, had on one occasion Lady Harriet Butler as his partner in a quadrille. The lady, fresh from Paris, astonished the *habitués* of Almack's by the grace and ease with which she performed the *entrechats*, as they were called. Lord Graves, anxious to emulate Lady Harriet's dexterity, attempted the figure; but his bulk was against him, and he fell heavily to the ground. Nothing disconcerted, he was quickly on his feet again, and finished the quadrille; but Sir John Burke, who was an amused spectator, could not resist remarking to him: "What could have induced you, at your age and in your state, to make so great a fool of yourself as to attempt an entrechat"? Whereupon the offended peer replied: "If you think I am too old to dance, I consider myself not too old to blow your brains out for your impertinence; so the sooner you find a second the better"; and had not Lord Sefton been at hand to pass the matter off with a sensible pleasantry, a duel would undoubtedly have been the upshot.

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[1] Lady Brownlow's *Reminiscences.*

So much for the dancing at Almack's.

The assemblies were useful in other ways, as all such places are. "Almack's," says an authority, "was a matrimonial bazaar, where mothers met to carry on affairs of state; and often has the table, spread with tepid lemonade, weak tea, tasteless *orgeat*, stale cakes, and thin slices of bread and butter—the only refreshment allowed—been the scene of tender proposals." "How often," adds the chronicler, "has Colinet's flageolet stifled the soft response, 'Ask Mamma!' How often have the guardian abigails in the cloak-room heard a whispered sigh, followed by what vulgarians term 'popping the question,' and a faint reply of 'Yes!'"

One of the rules was that no one might enter the rooms after eleven o'clock P.M. One can only suppose that there were good reasons for such a law, but the plain man fails to comprehend them. Not infrequently it was the cause of members being turned away, but at least on one occasion it was circumvented by a resourceful laggard.

Again enters the Iron Duke into the story of Almack's.

Ticknor[1] describes the circumstance more fully than it is given elsewhere, and I will therefore follow his version.

After dining one day with Lord and Lady Downshire he went on with his hostess and other ladies to Almack's. On this particular evening Lady Jersey happened to be the patroness, it being usual for only one member of the committee to fill this post at a time.

On their way to the ball the Downshire party called at Lady Mornington's, where they found the Duke of Wellington, who, being asked if he was going to Almack's, replied that "he thought he should look in by and by," on which his mother told him that "he had better go in good time, as Lady Jersey would make no allowance for him." However, he remained, and Ticknor and his friends proceeded to the rooms in King Street.

Some time later in the evening Ticknor was standing talking to Lady Jersey, when he heard one of the attendants say to her: "Lady Jersey, the Duke of Wellington is at the door, and desires to be admitted." "What o'clock is it?" she asked. "Seven minutes after eleven, your Ladyship." She paused an instant, and then said with emphasis and distinctness: "Give my compliments—give Lady Jersey's compliments to the Duke of Wellington, and say she is very glad that the first enforcement of the rule of exclusion is such that hereafter no one can complain of its application. He cannot be admitted."[2]

The stringency of Lady Jersey's rule is also well exemplified in the following anecdote, which I give in

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[1] *Diary*, vol. i., p. 245.

[2] These and similar incidents are referred to in Luttrell's *Advice to Julia*.

Gronow's own words: "When duelling was at its height in England, the most absurd pretexts were made for calling a man out. I recollect that at one of the dinners at The Thatched House in St James's Street, Mr Willis, the proprietor, in passing behind the chairs occupied by the company, was accosted by a Captain in the 3rd Guards, in a rather satirical manner. Mr Willis, smarting under the caustic remarks of the gallant captain, said aloud: 'Sir, I wrote to you at the request of Lady Jersey, saying that as her Ladyship was unacquainted with you, I had been instructed to reply to your letter, by stating that the Lady Patronesses declined sending you a ticket for the ball.' This statement, made in a public room, greatly irritated the captain; his friends in vain endeavoured to calm his wrath, and he sent a cartel the following day to Lord Jersey requesting he would name his second, etc. Lord Jersey replied in a very dignified manner, saying that if all persons who did not receive tickets from his wife were to call him to account for want of courtesy on her part, he should have to make up his mind to become a target for young officers, and he therefore declined the honour of the proposed meeting."

But not all the lady patronesses were so uncompromising as Lady Jersey; and on another occasion the great Duke was permitted to enter, the rule for this occasion being waived in his favour, but only at the request of one of the presiding deities.

It seems to have been no less difficult to break through the rules of Almack's than it was to evade the lynx-eyed janitors at the doors; but at least one occasion is recorded on which, by a trick, a noble peer succeeded in entering after the fatal strokes of eleven had sounded. It was in this wise. Owing to an accident to his carriage the gentleman in question arrived too late, but instead of attempting to enter, which he knew would be next to useless, he waited outside until some of his acquaintances came out; whereupon he went up to their carriage and pretended to say good-night to them, as a gentleman who was seeing them out was doing. On their departure the noble lord followed his friend in again, the latter truthfully telling the servants that they had been seeing some ladies into their carriage.

In Tom Moore's *Diary* we get some glimpses of Almack's jealously guarded interior and the doings that went on in its almost sacred precincts. In one early entry, in May 1819, he says: "Went to Almack's (the regular Assembly) and staid till three in the morning. Lord Morpeth said to me: 'You and I live at Almack's.'" Again, in the April of 1822, he notes one of his frequent visits, but adds sadly that though there was a "very pretty show of women," the place was "not quite what it used to be." However, a week later he was there again, but was very nearly too late, as he had attended Catalani's concert, and had been obliged to go home and dress again for the Assembly.

On 4th June in the following year he records again being a visitor, and with some complacency sets down the fact that Lady Jersey and Lady Tankerville "were sending various messengers after me through the room"; a circumstance on which he was bantered some days later at an assembly at Devonshire House by the Duchess of Sussex, who told him that she overheard someone near her say: "See them now; it is all on account of his reputation, for they do not care one pin about him!"

On another occasion, in May 1826, a fancy quadrille, called the "Paysannes Provençales," was danced, much to the poet's satisfaction, although he had expected to witness one entitled the "Twelve Months," which had been given up on account of the death of the sister of "one of the months."

Some days later it was performed, however, and Moore has this entry in his *Diary*:

"*June 31st.*—Went away (from a dinner at Lord King's) with Baring Wall, and having left him at the Traveller's, took his carriage home with me, and having refitted a little, made use of it to go to Almack's; was there early; waited till the Seasons arrived; got into their wake as they passed up the room, and saw them dance their quadrille; the twelve without any gentleman. Rather disappointed in the effect; their head-dresses (gold baskets full of fruit, flowers, etc.) too heavy; Miss Sheridan the handsomest of any; most of the others pretty, Miss Brand, the Misses Forester, Miss Acton, Miss Beauclerc; etc. As soon as I had seen them dance, came away."

There are other references to the famous assemblies in the *Diary*, but enough have been given, although I must not omit to mention that Moore speaks of the young girls of the period as "dating their ages and standing by their seasons at Almack's." One of them (Miss Macdonald), indeed, confessed to considering herself an old woman, from its being her second season!

There is no doubt that the strictness of the rules did much to keep up the reputation of Almack's, especially when these rules were enforced by such great ladies as the Countess of Jersey or the Princess Lieven; and Lord Lamington was perhaps right when he asserted that "Almack's was the portal to that select circle of intellect and grace which constituted the charm of Society." But at the same time laws enforced by such an iron hand, even if the hand was clothed in a velvet glove, must have become, after the early glamour of the place wore off somewhat, very much akin to tyranny.

Ticknor, when in this country at a later date (1835), found this to some extent, and thus notices it in his *Diary*:

"It was very brilliant, as it always is," he writes, "and the arrangements for ease and comfort were perfect; no ceremony, no supper; no regulation or managing; brilliantly lighted large halls, very fine music, plenty of dancing. It struck me, however, that there were fewer of the leading nobility and fashion there than formerly, and that the general cast of the company was younger."

Some modification of the rules had evidently taken place when a visitor could write that there was "no regulation or managing"; and, indeed, in one important particular, we know that there had been an alteration, for Ticknor, on this very occasion, records that he and his party arrived there "just before the doors were closed at midnight."[1]

Some five years later a writer in *The Quarterly Review*[2] notes this decadence still more insistently, and draws a moral from the decline of Almack's, in which he sees "a clear proof that the palmy days of exclusiveness are gone by in England." "And though," he adds, "it is obviously impossible to prevent any given number of persons from congregating and re-establishing an oligarchy, we are quite sure that the attempt would be ineffectual and that *the sense of their importance would extend little beyond the set.*"

It is in these last words which I have italicised that is adumbrated the remarkable power of Almack's as it was in its prime. Its influence and importance extended far beyond "the set" that composed it. We know that at no time had more than two thousand the *entrée*; its patronesses numbered not more than six or seven, but its fame and importance was a byword throughout the land; its influence was unquestioned; its power unassailable. It stood for the last word of fashion and exclusiveness. To be introduced into that magic circle was considered at one time as great a distinction as to be presented at Court, and was often far more difficult of attainment.

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[1] In a note to a passage in *Advice to Julia* we read: "It was till very lately settled that, even *after* half-past eleven, the whole string of coaches then formed in the street might deposit its contents in the ballroom. By this equitable construction many were admitted after midnight; but now (*circa* 1827), the hour of limitation has been enlarged till twelve o'clock and the privilege of the string abolished."

[2] For 1840.

In the fiction of the period the place figures perpetually; indeed, one novel bears its name, and was one of those *romans à clef* of which the key was supplied by no less a person than Disraeli. It was, in a word, *the* great social centre, the holy of holies of fashion, as it were, in London; and if, as he did, Carlyle wailed for the "gum flowers of Almack's to be made living roses in a new Eden," he at the same time could not help confessing that to a fraction of the universe "How will this look in Almack's?", was as insistent a question as "How will this look in the universe?" was to a man of genius.

Luttrell neatly summarised the place it held in the social world when he wrote:

"If once to Almack's you belong,
Like monarchs, you can do no wrong;
But banished thence on Wednesday night,
By Jove, you can do nothing right."

III

THE LADY PATRONESSES

From its earliest days, as we have seen, Almack's was identified with a female rule, which at times became as overbearing and as despotic as that of the Roman tyrants or the Venetian Council of Ten. But if this oligarchy bore heavily on those who came within the scope of its authority and influence, it was, at the same time, on the whole, notable for the fairness with which it administered the laws which it had itself formulated.

The character of the ladies who from time to time wielded the sceptre of despotism was, indeed, sufficient to guarantee the general absence of any flagrant act of petty spite or questionable taste; and if here and there such could be pointed to, they were merely those exceptions which we are taught to consider as proving the rule.

The beauty and the mental endowments of some of the great ladies who formed this tribunal of fashion, were alone sufficient to account for the power which they arrogated to themselves and which characterised every action as regards their administration of Almack's. To this was added that genius for administration and that love for exercising despotic power, which was inherent in others whose beauty of person or intellectual attainments would hardly have been sufficient to fit them for the post of rulers.

The combination certainly resulted in one of the most curious social anomalies of the latter part of the eighteenth, and the early years of the nineteenth, century—a small coterie dominating, without appeal, the whole of the

Society of London. It was the principle of an effective minority carried to its highest power!

Of all these patronesses Lady Jersey was, perhaps, the most notable.

This remarkable woman had, from her youth up, occupied a leading position in the Society of her day. Her amiable manners, her interest in politics, her admirable linguistic powers, her kindly, genial nature, all combined to give her a sort of prescriptive right to the exalted sphere in which she moved.

She was the daughter of the 10th Earl of Westmorland, and, as Lady Sarah Sophia Fane, had been married to the 5th Earl of Jersey, then Viscount Villiers, on 23rd May 1804.[1] It is important to be particular about this, in order that she may not be confounded with her notorious mother-in-law, Frances, Countess of Jersey, wife of the 4th Earl, who died in 1821, and whose connection with George IV. largely helped to bring the Crown into the discredit which attached to it at that period.

From 1805, when her husband succeeded to the title, till her death, in 1867, Sarah, Lady Jersey, was absolute Queen of London Society. Other great ladies, like the Marchioness of Londonderry, had greater wealth and more imposing houses; others, like Lady Palmerston, were more intimately connected with political matters; others, like the Princess Lieven, were more intellectually endowed; others, like the Duchess of Beaufort, were more beautiful; but not one of them approached Lady Jersey in that social sovereignty which she wielded for over half-a-century.

Sir William Fraser, who knew her well, has left the following word-picture of this uncrowned queen of fashion: "Lady Jersey never was a beauty. She had a grand figure to the last; never became the least corpulent, and, to use a common term, there was obviously no 'make up' about her. A considerable mass of grey hair; dressed, not as a young woman, but as a middle-aged one. Entirely in this, as in other things, without affectation, her appearance was always pleasant. No trace of rouge nor dye could ever be seen about her." This latter remark is corroborated by Madame Collorédo, the Austrian Ambassadress in London, who, once wishing to give some ladies an idea of Lady Jersey's appearance, exclaimed: "I will tell you what Lady Jersey was. A quatre-vingt ans elle portait une robe décolletée; et elle n'était pas choquante."

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[1] Her mother was Miss Child, daughter of Child, the banker; and it was she who eloped with Lord Westmorland from the paternal roof in Berkeley Square.

"She seemed," continues Sir William, "to take her sovereignty as a matter of course: to be neither vain of it, nor, indeed, to think much about it. Very quick and intelligent, with the strongest sense of humour that I have ever seen in a woman; taking the keenest delight in a good joke, and having, I should say, great physical enjoyment of life."

The testimony of Henry Greville bears out substantially Sir William Fraser's remarks, although the former allows her to have had a greater share of beauty than the latter concedes her, and he accounts for her remarkable social success "in a more refined and more brilliant society than is to be found in our own day" by her "great zest and gaiety, rather than her cleverness, which constituted her power of attracting remarkable men."

Whatever was the cause, the fact remains that "Queen Sarah," as she was called, ruled supreme in the realms of fashion for half-a-century, and made as few enemies as anyone in such an exalted position could be expected to do. The late Lord Lamington, who knew her intimately, recalls for us, in his *Days of the Dandies*, her "kindly genial presence," and he helps to let us into the secret of her social success when he says of her that "she possessed the special knowledge which rendered her society agreeable to literary men," and adds that, "her keenness in politics placed her at the head, as it made her house the centre, of attraction to the then Tory party."

Such testimonies as these may be supposed to be the highly coloured eulogiums of personal acquaintance, but when Charles Greville, who, though also a close friend, is known never to have spared his friends when estimating their characters, thus sums up Lady Jersey's qualities, I think we may be satisfied that the consensus of praise bestowed upon her was merited:

"Lady Jersey," writes the diarist,[1] "is an extraordinary woman, and has many good qualities: surrounded as she is by flatterers and admirers, she is neither proud nor conceited. She is full of vivacity, spirit, and good nature, but the wide range of her sympathies and affections proves that she has more general benevolence than particular sensibility in her character. She performs all the ordinary duties of life with great correctness, because her heart is naturally good . . . in conversation she is lively and pleasant, without being very remarkable, for she has neither wit, nor imagination, *nor humour.*"

I end the extract at this point to mark more obviously the conflicting judgments of contemporaries. Sir William Fraser considered that Lady Jersey had a greater sense of humour than any other woman with whom he was acquainted; Charles Greville will not allow that she possessed this gift at all! If Sir William was sometimes hyperbolic in his expressions, we must remember that Greville—the Gruncher, as he was familiarly called—was accustomed to find fault with everyone, and perhaps he saw no humour in Lady Jersey because he had not himself the humour to detect it.

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[1] *Journals*, vol. i., pp. 12-13.

Besides her house in Berkeley Square, Lady Jersey inherited Osterley Park, with a large fortune, from her grandfather, Mr Child, the banker, in these circumstances: Mr Child had an only daughter, who, falling in love with Lord Burghersh, eldest son of the Earl of Westmorland, eloped with him, and although closely followed by her angry father, reached Gretna Green just—and only just—in time to be married. Finding himself powerless to do anything further, Child determined, at least, to prevent any of his fortune from going direct to his daughter, and he therefore made a will leaving the whole of it to any daughter that might be born of the marriage, and Lady Sarah Fane, afterwards Countess of Jersey, was the lucky heiress.

It is said that a few days before the elopement Lord Burghersh, dining with Mr Child, put to him the question as to what he should do if he were in love with a girl and could not gain her parents' consent to a marriage, when the unsuspecting banker replied: "Elope with her, to be sure"; on which parental advice the young man promptly acted.

On Lord Jersey's marrying Lady Sarah he took the name of Child in addition to his own of Villiers; and there still hangs in a room in Child's Bank, Lawrence's full-length portrait of Lady Jersey—surely a more beautiful partner than bank ever had before or since.

Another great influence in the debates of Almack's powerful committee was Lady Londonderry, the wife of a distinguished member of the peerage as well as a brilliant soldier, the 3rd Marquis of Londonderry, and sister-in-law of the celebrated Lord Castlereagh, who died by his own hand in 1822, and to whom her husband succeeded in the marquisate. Very rich, and possessing fine houses, both in London and the country, it is hardly to be wondered at that these advantages, coupled with her double connection with politics and the Army, should have enabled Lady Londonderry to compass such social power as she had a mind to; but, notwithstanding this, she never attained anything approaching the influence wielded by Lady Jersey, or the authority in matters of fashion of Lady Cowper.

This latter lady had a singularly eventful career. The daughter of the 1st Lord Melbourne, she married, as the Hon. Emily Mary Lamb, the 5th Earl Cowper, on 21st July 1805; he died in 1837, and his widow, two years afterwards, became the wife of the 3rd Lord Palmerston. As her brother was one Prime Minister, and her second husband another, she may be said to have grasped politics with both hands.

But it was perhaps owing to this very circumstance that she was never able to restrict herself to that exclusiveness which so greatly helped to enhance the reputation and solidify the power of Lady Jersey.

But she played her part admirably, and whether she was assisting at some of the mysteries of Almack's, or was presiding over the splendid entertainments with which she shed a lustre over Cambridge House,[1] she was always affable, always interested, always conciliating; and if many of the ephemeral quarrels of Almack's were smoothed away by her ready wit and ever-present tact, it is as certain that the power of the "frolicsome statesman—the man of the day," as Locker-Lampson calls him—was consolidated and extended by the careful watchfulness of his better half. If such a testimony were required, the pages of Henry Greville's diary would be sufficient to show that Lady Palmerston fully shared her husband's confidence, not only in private but in political matters, and there is little doubt that much of his popularity and success was due to her loving co-operation.

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[1] No. 94 Piccadilly, once the residence of the Earls of Egremont, later of the Marquis of Cholmondeley, then of the Duke of Cambridge (whence its name), who died here in 1850, when Lord Palmerston took it. It is now the Naval and Military—the "In and Out"—Club.

Lady Sefton, another of the oligarchy of Almack's, was altogether a different character; and, indeed, it was probably this happy mixture of different temperaments and varied interests that combined to make that oligarchy as powerful as it undoubtedly was.

Lady Sefton, *née* Maria Margaret, daughter of the 6th Lord Craven, was the wife of that famous *bon-vivant* and gambler, the 2nd Earl of Sefton, the friend of the Regent and the companion of Brummell, who, in spite of being "a gigantic hunchback," as Gronow records, was one of the dandies of the day, and a fine horseman.

Lady Sefton was, on the same authority, both kind and amiable, and she probably left much of the judicial accepting or refusing of candidates for entrance into Almack's, to the severer judgments of some of her assistant patronesses.

One of these, who, we may be sure, carefully scrutinised every application of this sort, and judicially weighed the merits or otherwise of those who sought the much-coveted cards, was the haughty and exclusive Princess Lieven, one of the two foreigners who became patronesses.

Dorothea Christorovna Benckendorff, for such was her maiden name, was in all respects a very remarkable woman; and whereas in most cases their connection with Almack's has alone caused many of the lady patronesses to be remembered at all, in hers, it was but an incident in her career as a female politician of the first rank.

This being so, a few words about her history will not be inappropriate. She was born on 17th December 1785, at

Riga, where her father was military commandant; so that from her earliest years she was accustomed to the atmosphere of rule and political activity.

Educated at the Smolny Convent School, she was, on leaving it, appointed Maid of Honour to the Empress of Russia in 1799, and in 1800 was married to Lieutenant-General Count Lieven. Nine years later her husband was appointed Russian Envoy to Prussia, when she had her first opportunity of publicly exhibiting those precocious talents as a hostess and a talker with which she had been credited at an even earlier period. In 1811 Count Lieven was promoted to be Ambassador to the Court of St James's, having for his chief object the resumption of those friendly relations between this country and Russia, which had been for a time suspended in consequence of the Peace of Tilsit.

Settled in this country, the Countess Lieven seems to have become quite as politically active as her husband, and her relations with such men as Aberdeen and Wellington, Canning and Grey, Palmerston and Peel, were of the closest; while her letters are eloquent of her varying estimation of those with whom she was thus brought in contact. On the other hand, the opinion of some of these politicians as regards the lady herself was not always flattering, and Wellington once bluntly asserted to Raikes that she would betray everyone in turn if it happened to suit her purpose; a sentiment which Palmerston echoed, although with less cause, perhaps, as the Countess Lieven had been, politically, of much use to him.

As may be supposed, her name frequently occurs in the various memoirs and journals of the day, particularly in the diaries of the two Grevilles, where she is shown to be so obviously *au courant* with all the twists and turns of contemporary politics, that one wonders why such a lesser light as her husband troubled to interfere in them at all! "Her cleverness," we are told,[1] "was generally recognised, but her tact was shown rather in her fastidiousness than by her geniality, and the impression she produced was that she was as fully conscious of her own superiority as she was of the inferiority of those with whom she was brought in daily contact."

No wonder that it was also commonly said that she considered herself more competent to advance the interests of her country, than the Emperor and his Ministers combined. This, indeed, was the keynote of her character—an overweening sense of her own importance, which may not always be a fatal attribute; but also an absolute disdain for the qualities of those opposed to her, which is nearly always so. Her power, however, of extracting confidences from those whose knowledge might be useful to her, and a tireless following-up of the advantages thus gained, were undoubtedly great.

With such qualities it is not so difficult to realise that her position as one of the patronesses of Almack's was one which added that peculiar strength most required by that body, but was also one which could hardly fail to strike dismay into those who might have hoped to pass the magic portals during some temporary lapse on the part of other members of the tribunal. One could surely never hope to evade the lynx-like vigilance of the Russian Ambassadress.

She emphasised her term of office by introducing the waltz into these aristocratic assemblies, and many of the references to her in the memoirs and diaries of the period are confined to her connection with Almack's.

In 1834 the Lievens were recalled to Russia, but we find the Princess, for her husband had been created a Prince, in this country again during the troublous year

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[1] By Mr L. G. Robinson, who edited her *Letters* in 1902.

1848, when she followed Guizot hither. Two years later she took up her residence in Paris where, in 1857, she died in the house that had once before sheltered another great political spirit—no unfitting male counterpart to the Princess—Talleyrand.

The Princess Lieven was one of the two foreigners who helped to direct the destinies of Almack's, the Princess Esterhazy[1] was the other. Born Princess Theresa of Thurn and Taxis, she married Prince Esterhazy, the Austrian Ambassador, and with him became closely connected with the fashionable life of this country, inasmuch as they were both members of Almack's.

Gronow speaks of the Princess being continually seen waltzing with the Baron de Neumann, the Secretary to the Austrian Embassy, and in the *Sketch of a Ball at Almack's in 1815*, she is delineated, most ungracefully it must be confessed, dancing with the Comte St Antonio, afterwards Duke of Canizzaro, a noted lady-killer and dandy, who subsequently married Miss Johnson.

Princess Lieven, in one of her gossiping letters, describes the Princess Esterhazy as "small, round, black, animated, and somewhat spiteful," and adds that, although she was "a great-niece of the Queen of England, through her mother, the Princess of Thurn and Taxis," yet "this relationship gives her no sort of precedence here, as she is regarded as belonging to the *corps diplomatique.*"

However much she may have identified herself with the social life of the country to which her husband had been accredited, it can hardly be supposed that the Princess's knowledge of the various grades of our society — a notoriously difficult subject for foreigners—would have been extensive enough to enable her very closely to discriminate between who should and who should not be admitted within the walls of Almack's; and we can therefore only regard her as adding strength to the committee by her high birth, natural love of etiquette (for she was, we remember, of a royal German house) and, perhaps, by her "spitefulness," if such existed outside the rather atrabilious imagination of the Princess Lieven.

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[1] She must not be confounded with Lady Sarah Villiers, daughter of Lord Jersey, who married Prince Nicholas Esterhazy in 1842. See *Raikes*, vol. iv., p. 192. Raikes, by the by, erroneously states that Princess Lieven was the only foreigner ever made a patroness of Almack's (vol. i., p. 234).

The last of the oligarchy to be mentioned is Mrs Drummond Burrell, who afterwards became Lady Willoughby de Eresby, the only surviving child of James, Lord Perth, who, had not the title been forfeited as a result of the then Earl of Perth's sympathies with the Old Pretender, would have been 11th Earl of Perth, and his daughter consequently Lady Clementina Drummond.

Miss Drummond, as she, however, was, married in 1807 Peter Robert Burrell, one of the dandies of the day. On his marriage he assumed his wife's family name in conjunction with his own. His father had been created Lord Gwydyr, and in 1820 he succeeded to that title; his mother was Lady Willoughby de Eresby in her own right, and in 1828 he also succeeded to this title, which carries with it the great post of Joint Hereditary Grand Chamberlain, in which office he acted at the Coronation of Queen Victoria, and for which he had acted as deputy at that of George IV.

Both Mr and Mrs Drummond Burrell were at one time intimate friends of the latter monarch, but there would appear to have arisen a coolness between them for a period, according to a passage in one of Princess Lieven's letters to her son, wherein she writes:

"Do you recollect Mrs Burrell, and do you remember how she was turned out of the Prince Regent's circle? Well, now she is one of the King's select and most intimate group. He does not give audience to his Ministers but he receives Mrs Burrell."

There is a sting in these lines which may or may not have been intended; in any case the friendship between the King and Mrs Burrell was of a purely platonic nature, and if there *had* been a temporary discontinuance of it, this may have arisen from the fact that Mrs Burrell was a close friend of Lady Hertford, and probably, on Lady Jersey's rise to favour, the King was little inclined to see much of the friend of the discarded favourite.

However, the Burrells, as we see, were again on the old terms of intimacy with the Sovereign, and it was to the husband (become Lord Gwydyr) that the King applied to know the feelings of the dandies as to his treatment of Queen Caroline, when it was known to be the intention of that ill-used woman to try to force a way into the Abbey, on the occasion of the Coronation. "It is not favourable to your Majesty," replied Lord Gwydyr. "I care nothing for the mob," said George IV., "but I do for the dandies"; and he sought Lord Gwydyr's advice as to the best means of propitiating this formidable body. The latter suggested his Majesty's inviting them to a breakfast somewhere near the Abbey as a means of keeping them in a good humour, which advice was promptly acted upon.

This anecdote is interesting as showing the power wielded by a set of men whose chief objects in life were dressing well and gambling heavily.

IV

THE WITS AND THE DANDIES

It seems fitting that some account of Almack himself should precede that of the notable men who helped to make his rooms famous, but the difficulty is that the material at my command is of the most meagre. Indeed, the very year of his birth is unknown, which is a bad beginning when one is attempting to describe a man's life. Again, it seems uncertain whether he came of a Scottish, an Irish or a Yorkshire family, one version giving it that he was descended from Yorkshire Quaker stock; another that he was a "sturdy Celt from Galloway or Atholl, called MacCaul."

It is generally believed that his original name was Macall and that he changed it, by a process of inversion, to Almack, when he first started as club proprietor, on account of the odium into which anything Scottish had fallen at this period (about the middle) of the eighteenth century. But this is based a good deal on conjecture, and in *Notes and Queries* a number of letters and other communications on the subject leave the matter not much clearer than it was before.

Personally I am inclined to think that no such change was ever attempted. Almack is as common a name as Macall, although neither is frequently met with; and surely if a man had wanted to hide his origin he could have done so more skilfully and more successfully than by merely playing a conjuring trick with the letters of his name.

What does seem to be established is that Almack was at one time valet to the 5th Duke of Hamilton, and that while in this capacity he became acquainted with Elizabeth Cullen, elder daughter of William Cullen of Sanches, Lanarkshire, who was a waiting-maid to the Duchess, and whom he subsequently married.

About the middle of the eighteenth century he, like so many of his countrymen, turned his eyes southward, and, coming to London, he became the proprietor of The Thatched House Tavern.

Here used to assemble at various times the many clubs that had selected the place as their headquarters. No fewer than twenty-six are given by Timbs, as well as nine Masonic lodges which held their mysterious revels here. Chief among the clubs were the Catch Club, the Linnean Club, the Literary Society, the Royal Society Club and the Dilettanti Society.

The large room of The Tavern was once hung with portraits of the various members of the last-named, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was one of them, painted for the society three important works, two of which were groups of the Dilettanti, "in the manner of Paul Veronese," and the third a portrait of the great painter himself.

Timbs says that Willis took The Tavern from a Mr Freere about the year 1755, but it was Almack himself who did this, Willis succeeding him, as he did, in the proprietorship of "The Rooms."

The success of this venture induced Almack to seek further fields to conquer, with the result that, certainly previous to the year 1763, he had opened the club in Pall Mall which went by his name and which was notable for the extent of the gambling that was carried on there, even at a time when gambling was practically universal.

This club was established on the site of the British Institution buildings, and Almack appears to have been backed in his venture by no fewer than twenty-seven noblemen and gentlemen, among whom the Dukes of Roxburghe and Portland,[1] Lord Strathmore, Mr Crewe and Charles James Fox may be mentioned.

Some of the rules arc instructive: thus No. 22 lays down that "Dinner shall be served up exactly at half-past four o'clock, and the bill shall be brought in at seven"; while No. 40 orders "That every person playing at the new guinea table do keep fifty guineas before him."

I am not here writing the history of the club or I might startle this more sober age by some records of the gambling there, but something of it may be surmised by a reference to the similar records of such clubs as The Cocoa Tree, and Brooks's and Crockford's, where, as we have seen, men won and lost large fortunes at a sitting.

With the proceeds of his two clubs, which must have amounted to a very large sum in a very small space of time, Almack erected the Rooms in King Street, St James's, which are more individually connected with his career and, it is likely, will serve to perpetuate his name better than the club by which he first became known.

It is unnecessary to say anything here of the building or its *habitués*, as I have dealt with this subject in the preceding chapters. Nor is there much more to be said of their proprietor.

We know from an extract from one of Gilly Williams's letters, which I have already quoted, that he was in the habit of attending to his guests himself and personally superintending his fashionable establishment, and that his wife was an efficient coadjutor in this respect.

It may also be remarked that if he *did* change his name, it did not deceive Gilly Williams, who speaks, as we have seen, of his "*Scotch face.*"

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[1] The 3rd Duke, who was First Lord of the Treasury from 1807 to 1809.

Almack is said to have lived during the latter years of his life at Hounslow, and to have amassed great wealth. He died on 3rd January 1781, and in the *Morning Chronicle* for 6th January is an obituary notice of him.

Among other provisions of his will he left the management of the famous Rooms to a niece, who had married the Mr Willis after whom they began, in later days, to be called.

This bequest is consistent with the fact that Almack left the actual property to his daughter, who had previously become the wife of David Pitcairn, F.R.S., F.S.A., M.D., and Physician-Extraordinary to the Prince of Wales. Almack also had a son, William, who is known to have been called to the Bar, but who probably predeceased his father.

In the early days of Almack's popularity the men who affected it, or perhaps I should say who were permitted to enter its sacred portals, were the cream of the fine gentlemen of the period. Horace Walpole was of it, almost as a matter of course; so was George Selwyn; but alas! his bosom friend, my Lord March, was rejected, as we have seen. Gilly Williams, we may be sure, entered it pretty freely, for many a letter of his contains notes of its doings.

The Dukes of Cumberland, both he of Culloden notoriety and he of fast life fame, assisted at its entertainments. One supposes, too, that my Lord Upper Ossory came pretty frequently to meet "Grafton's Grace," with whom he was subsequently to run away.

But in the early days of Almack's it was the ladies who ruled supreme and whose doings are chiefly chronicled in the gossiping letters of the period. During its second phase of popularity, this same characteristic also distinguished it; but at the same time there arose that remarkable set of men whom I may collectively term "The Dandies," and these and their doings and sayings made as great a stir as even the goings and comings of the beautiful and witty women with whom they associated. The late Lord Lamington wrote of "The Days of the Dandies"; a French writer of to-day has treated of "Dandyism," and incidentally of its chief exponents; and Barbey D'Aurevilly has left a little masterpiece on Brummell, the greatest of the Dandies; and yet the subject is never quite stale. The fact is that the Dandies were not mere clothes-horses; they all, or nearly all of them, were men of something above ordinary ability, and they certainly proved, what many slovenly men of genius, and many who think themselves men of genius because they are slovenly, have affected to doubt, that it is possible to possess brains and yet wear good coats; that a fop is not necessarily a fool; in a word, that fine feathers, if they do not make, at least well become, fine birds!

By common consent the greatest of the Dandies, in the earlier days of the movement, was Brummell; while the greatest wearer of his mantle (and what a cut that mantle had!) at a later period was Count D'Orsay.

I shall try to say a few words about these two notable men, as well as about a number of lesser stars that shone, sometimes by their own radiance, more often perhaps in the reflected glory of these twin luminaries.

Brummell's is an heroic figure, although perhaps not many people would be prepared to distinguish him by this particular adjective; but still an heroic figure, if you think for a moment of the position he achieved, the power he wielded, and then remember his stock-in-trade, as it were, for the character of conqueror. With £30,000, a love of clean shirts and an unparaleled *aplomb*, he made himself adored by half the society of London and feared by the whole. Royal dukes attended his morning levées; the greatest nobles in the land were proud to watch the progress of his toilette, and he—he spoke to them as if they were lackeys; he criticised their clothes as if they were liveries. How was it done? Fifteen hundred a year in the 5 per cents. was not good enough, even then, to place anyone on such a footing as he attained.

The fact is that Society likes to be bullied, especially if the bully be one whom it knows to be socially beneath it; it is something like permitting a spoiled child to take liberties. And this child did take liberties. "Do you call that *thing* a coat?" he once asked his Grace of Bedford, the head of the Russells, the owner of how much of London. "In Heaven's name, my dear Duchess, what is the meaning of that extraordinary back of yours? I declare I must put you on a back-board; you must positively walk out of the room backwards, that I mayn't see it," he once had the "audacious effrontery," as Lady Hester Stanhope says, to remark to the Duchess of Rutland in the midst of a great ball. On another occasion he walked up to Lady Hester himself and coolly took out the earrings she was wearing, as an indication that he considered they hid the turn of her neck, which is said to have been very beautiful. "Port? Port?—oh, *port*!—oh, ay; what! the hot intoxicating liquor so much drunk by the lower orders?" he lisped to someone who asked him if he liked the wine. He was annoyed because an acquaintance once reminded him of a debt of £500; "and yet," he almost pathetically exclaimed, "I had called the dog Tom, and let myself dine with him!" His *batterie de toilette* was of silver, for, said he, "'tis impossible for a gentleman to spit in clay," knowing full well that his auditors, probably a few stray dukes, were not accustomed to spit in anything else. And so on, and so on, down to the impudence of, "Wales, ring the bell," and the sublimity of "Who's your fat friend?"

The stories are as well known as Sydney Smith's witticisms or Sheridan's impromptu bons mots.

Brummell was no fool—we have Lady Hester Stanhope's word for that; indeed, the whole thing was a skilfully thought-out *pose*, which took on with the *blasé* society in which Brummell moved; and how well for a time it succeeded let Captain Jesse, with his two octavo volumes on the subject, attest.

Here is a vignette of the Beau's customary toilet-levée given by Lady Hester: "Sometimes he would have a dozen dukes and marquises waiting for him whilst he was brushing his teeth or dressing himself, and would turn round with the utmost coolness and say to them: 'Well, what do you want? Don't you see I am brushing my teeth?' Then he would cry: 'Oh! there's a spot—ah! it's nothing but a little coffee. Well, this is an excellent powder, but I won't let any of you have the receipt for it.'"

And yet day after day would this fashionable crowd congregate to see that wonderful ceremony—no other word will serve—of the toilet of George Bryan Brummell—that ceremony which took up the best part of the morning. I need not recapitulate Jesse's minute account of it; suffice it to say that as much trouble, care and time, was expended on the cravat alone as would have sufficed a mere man to make a fortune; and, in a sense, it was a fortune that the dandy was making.

The Regent once said that he was "a mere tailor's dummy to hang clothes on"; but this was unfair coming from such lips, for George, Prince of Wales, owed much of his sartorial fame to Brummell. He copied his garments: he used to give as much as £100 a-piece for the patterns of those fine chintz dressing-gowns which the Beau had introduced; he wore the trouser which the dandy had imported from Germany, and—he let his friend starve when he had done with him!

I don't know that Brummell had much wit; one or two stories seem, indeed, to indicate some faint glimmer of it, but his mental stock-in-trade was his impudence.

Here is a sheaf of anecdotes from the Brummell repertoire. All the world knows of his once staying in a country house, and asking a friend whom the distinguished-looking man was leaning against the mantelpiece. "Why, your host; don't you know him?" "Know him!—No, why should I? I have never been invited here!" But this curious liking for visiting houses uninvited—curious, inasmuch as Brummell practically had the *entrée* anywhere—once led to another and less successful example of his impertinence. Two ladies named Johnson and Thompson, living respectively in Finsbury Square and Grosvenor Square, both gave a party on the same night, and the Beau was invited to the house of the former. He, however, elected to shed the light of his countenance on the Grosvenor Square assembly, where he hoped to meet the Regent, with whom he was not then on terms of amity. On his arrival, Mrs Thompson, forgetting her politeness in her annoyance, and probably fearing the loss of the Regent's favour if he found his enemy within her walls, asked Brummell to leave. The latter, making many apologies, drew slowly from his pocket the invitation he had received from the lady of Finsbury Square and tendered it to Mrs Thompson as his reason for being in her rooms. Being indignantly informed that her name was Thompson and not Johnson, "Dear me, how very unfortunate," replied he, "but you know Johnson and Thompson—I mean Thompson and Johnson are so very much alike. Mrs Johnson—Thompson, I wish you good evening."

He was once in the 10th Hussars, but left that crack regiment when the order went forth that it was to be stationed at Manchester—Manchester!

One cannot imagine Brummell as a soldier, attending drill, looking after his men, fighting—surely far too vulgar a pursuit! Indeed, he is traditionally said to have known his corps only by the large nose of one of the men; and when the latter was drafted into another regiment, Brummell went up to it, on parade, and pointed out the nasal organ as a proof that it was *his* regiment.

If he was ever witty, then the remark he made to "Poodle" Byng may be regarded as a slender proof of it, for, meeting Byng driving with a *caniche* by his side, he called out: "Ah, how d'ye do, Byng!—a family vehicle I see."

On another occasion he was reproached by the father of a certain young man for having led astray and ruined the latter: "Why, sir," he replied, "I did all I could for him. I once gave him my arm all the way from White's to Brooks's."

It is sad to have to confess that this "glass of fashion" acted sometimes in a way that a coal-heaver would have been ashamed of doing. Once at a dinner-party he questioned the quality of the champagne, and called out to the servant not to give him "any more of that cider"; at another time, finding a chicken wing too tough for his delicate jaws, he took it up in his napkin and flung it to his dog—for he insisted on taking the only thing he probably ever cared for with him, even to strange houses—exclaiming: "Here, *Atons*, see if you can get your teeth through it, for I'm d——d if I can." Which is on a par with the horrible grimaces he used to make if the flavour of a dish did not please him, or he thought he detected some foreign substance in the soup.

Often as the fear or politeness of his host or hostess allowed such ill manners to go unreproved, Brummell sometimes met more than his match in these encounters, and whenever this was the case, he showed his lack of repartee and not infrequently his fear of chastisement.

Once he was airily taking away someone's character when a friend of the absent one demanded satisfaction or an apology in five minutes. "Five minutes!—in five seconds," replied the trembling Beau, as he stammered out his regrets.

But it was Lord Mayor Combe who voiced what many people thought, but hardly liked to express, of the character of Brummell. The scene was Brooks's, and the brewer (for Combe was of the great firm which still exists) and Beau were playing together: "Come, *Mash-tub*," cried the latter, "what do you set?" "A pony," was the reply, which Brummell won, together, it is said, with eleven more "ponies." "Thank you, Alderman; in future I shall drink no porter but yours." "I wish," was the reply, "that every other *blackguard* in London would tell me the same."

But one must make an end, and these are but a tithe of the stories connected with the Beau. As I have indicated, they show but two things—one, that, like all bullies by nature, he disregarded entirely people's feelings, and the other, that he cut a very poor figure when he met his match.

An illustration in Captain Gronow's book shows him as he appeared at Almack's, in 1815, in company with the Duchess of Rutland (whose back gave him such pain), the Comte de St Antonio, afterwards Duc di Canizzaro, and the Princess Esterhazy, one of the most potent of the patronesses.

The original sketch in water-colours of this picture was presented to Brummell by the artist. At the sale of the dandy's effects in Chapel Street, Mayfair, it was purchased by a friend of Gronow's, who subsequently gave it to him.

Here is Gronow's description of the people depicted, whom he considered "well worthy of notice, both from the position they held in the fashionable world, and from their being represented with great truth and accuracy."

"The great George Brummell," he proceeds, "the Admirable Crichton of the age, stands in a *dégagé* attitude, with his fingers in his waistcoat pocket. His neckcloth is inimitable, and must have cost him much time and trouble to arrive at such perfection, as the following anecdote shows:—A friend calling on the Beau saw the valet with an armful of flowing white cravats and asked him if his master wanted so many at once. 'These, sir, are our failures,' was the reply. 'Clean linen and plenty of it,' was Brummell's maxim. He is talking earnestly to the charming Duchess of Rutland, who was a Howard and mother to the present Duke.[1] The tall man in a black coat, who is preferring to waltz with Princess Esterhazy, so long Ambassadress of Austria in London, is the Comte de St Antonio, afterwards Duke of Canizzaro. He resided many years in England, was a very handsome man and a great lady-killer; he married an English heiress, Miss Johnson."

Other personages who figured in the same sketch were Charles, Marquis of Queensberry; Baron de Neumann, then Secretary to the Austrian Embassy; Sir George Warrender (who was styled by his friends Sir George Provender, being famed for his good dinners); and the Comte St Aldegonde, then aide-de-camp to the Duke of Orleans, afterwards Louis-Philippe.

Chief among the Dandies, after Brummell, were Lords Alvanley, Worcester, and Foley, Charles Standish, Bradshaw, Henry de Ros, John Mills, Henry Pierrepoint, Hervey Aston, the Duke of Argyll, "Dan" Mackinnon, Edward Montagu, "Rufus" Lloyd and George Dawson Damer; while to these names may be added those of several well-known men about town, who, if not exactly

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[1] She was Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the 5th Earl of Carlisle, and married the 5th Duke of Rutland in 1799.

beaux, at least were in the first flight of fashion and consequently qualified to shine—as they frequently did —at Almack's.

Of these were "King " Allen, "Ball " Hughes, the "Silent " Hare, Jack Talbot, "Teapot " Crawfurd, "Kangaroo " Cooke, Scrope Davies and "Poodle " Byng. The great D'Orsay deserves a niche to himself and shall have it, after I have said a word about some of these lesser Dandies.

Perhaps the greatest of them was Lord Alvanley; certainly, if tradition is to be believed, he was one of the, if not the, wittiest. Just as at a former period all the good things were attributed to Sheridan and, at a later day, to Sydney Smith, so in the early years of the nineteenth century were all the witticisms set down to the account of Alvanley. A contemporary, in an enthusiastic outburst, calls him "the magnificent, the witty, the famous and the chivalrous," and asserts that he was "the idol of the clubs and of Society, from the King to the ensign of the Guards." Which would sound hyperbolic did we not know that he had lived in nearly all the Courts of Europe and was not only a remarkable linguist but an excellent classical scholar, and that his *naïveté* was such that it exercised a charm over all who knew him. But when this has been said I don't know that his life would be considered as an example for youth, although possibly an excellent tract might be made out of it.

Living in the society he did, it goes without saying that he was extravagant, cynical and, if not exactly what one would call immoral, certainly not up to the ethical standard which stern moralists would require.

But his dinners were perfect—indeed, the best in London at the time, and a good dinner hides a host of delinquencies. There were, indeed, giants in those days, and Alvanley was of them. He had a passion for apricots, and ordered a tart of this fruit to be served every day throughout the year. Fearful of the expense his cook remonstrated. "Go to Gunter's," exclaimed his lordship, "and buy all the preserved apricots he has, and don't bother me any more about the d——d expense." This was an easy way out of the difficulty, for it was a notorious fact that Alvanley never by any chance paid ready money for anything. Which, by the by, gives point to the story that his friend Armstrong asked him, on once being shown a fine hunter, how much he had paid for it. "I *owe* Milton three hundred guineas for it," was the tranquil reply.

The fact is that, although he inherited from his father a considerable income, he was perennially in debt and, like Digby Grant, he "had no ready money for anybody." Not that this seems to have greatly troubled him; and Moore tells a story of his writing to a friend on one occasion thus: "I have no credit with either butcher or poulterer, but if you can put up with turtle and turbot I shall be happy to see you."

He had, too, a happy turn for impromptus and repartees, of the former of which gifts the following is an example:—He was driving with Berkeley Craven when their carriage broke down and the latter got out to thrash the coachman for carelessness, but, finding he was an old fellow, said: "Your *age* protects you," whereupon Alvanley advanced to administer chastisement to the postilion, when, observing that he was a young athletic-looking fellow, he exclaimed in a waggish way: "Your *youth* protects you."

There is, too, the story variously told of his being shown the beautiful decorations of his house by a *parvenu* millionaire, supposed to have been Mr Neeld, what time dinner was awaiting them, when Alvanley, bored and hungry, exclaimed: "Let's leave the gilding and come to the carving."

He had also a knack of fixing nicknames which stuck, one of the best being that applied to Lord Conyngham, to whom Canning had given an appointment out of deference, it was supposed, to George IV.; he went about calling him *Canningham.*

Another bon mot which was set down to his account was the remark apropos of Brummell's departure for the Continent in consequence of the pressure put on him by Soloman, the notorious moneylender of the time. "He did quite right to be off; it was Soloman's judgment."

Alvanley was intimate with Talleyrand, that master of *mots*, and there is little doubt that his wits were sharpened by many a "set-to" with this redoubtable antagonist. Indeed, as Raikes says, his amiable manners and his talents made him a welcome guest everywhere, and he numbered among his friends the great ones of half the countries of Europe.

As a politician he held no mean rank, although he was one of those who cared not for office. His pamphlet on the state of Ireland shows that he could present a case in clear and forcible language; but, politically, he is best remembered by his conflict with O'Connell, who called him a "*bloated buffoon*" and whom he immediately challenged. The gage was taken up by the agitator's son, and the parties met and exchanged more shots than was at the time considered necessary; however, none of them took effect, but the encounter enhanced Alvanley's reputation as a wit and confirmed him as a man of courage, for to the coachman who drove him to and from the ground he gave a sovereign, and when the man observed that it was more than his due (one wonders, by the by, where that sort of cabby is to be found nowadays!) he replied: "It is not for carrying me there, my good fellow, but for bringing me back."

It was characteristic of the man that when someone told him that the world was indebted to him for calling out O'Connell he should reply: "I'm glad to hear it, for now the world and I are quits."

That he did not desert his friends is proved by his letters to Brummell when the latter was in exile at Calais, which oftener than not contained substantial cheques, although he could not resist a harmless pleasantry on the Beau, whom he termed the one and only *Dande*lion of fashion, most lions being annuals, but Brummell being perennial.

Alvanley was an altogether superior man to many of those who surrounded him and made up the sum of those Dandies who gave an added brilliance to Almack's and the other haunts of fashion.

If he was extravagant, extravagance was in the air, and one could hardly be the friend of the Duke of York and make a reputation as a man of fashion under the Regency without a continual loosening of the purse-strings.[1]

Of many of the Dandies who graced Almack's assemblies there is, in truth, but little to be said. They passed across the stage of fashion and have left in the memoirs of their day here and there a trace of their passage, but hardly material for any particular delineation.

Such men as Lord Worcester,[2] Lord Foley and the Duke of Argyll, of course, have a place in the noble annals of the land from their position as hereditary legislators as well as that of leaders of fashion. Such as Pierrepoint, Standish, Bradshaw and Mills, may be regarded as almost international types, being as much *en évidence* in the dandified circles of Paris as in those of London; while many of the others are really but names—*et praeterea nihil*!

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[1] There is a coloured caricature by Deighton, representing Alvanley going to White's, dated 1819, see page 177.

[2] Afterwards 7th Duke of Beaufort, and noted, like all the Somerset family, for his inherent courtliness and charm of manner.

Truth to tell, the lives of most Dandies was but a dressing and an undressing, a preparation for conquest, a repetition of conquests. Danton's *de l'audace, de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace*, might well have stood for their motto.

But about the phantoms of some of those I have mentioned anecdotes have clustered, and before I say a word about the greatest and last of them, Count D'Orsay, it may not be uninteresting to rescue one or two of these for the reader's amusement.

It will be observed that several of the Dandies have been distinguished by nicknames, almost a certain proof that they have made some stir in the world of fashion if nowhere else.

"Teapot" Crawfurd is a case in point, and he was certainly one of those who bore out Wellington's assertion that the Dandies fought splendidly in Spain. He was in the 10th Hussars, and even in that crack regiment his immense strength, handsome appearance and proverbial bravery, made him a marked man.

When his regiment was inspected by the Prince Regent before leaving for the Peninsula his Royal Highness, who was always ready with a generous and appropriate word, is said to have exclaimed to him: "Go, my boy, and show the world what stuff you are made of. You possess strength, youth and courage; go and conquer."

The field of Orthes, where he was in the front of the charge, could witness that these words were not exaggerated or thrown away upon him.

He married Lady Barbara Coventry and made a good husband, which is a fact worth noting, and we have Gronow's authority for knowing that as a companion he was charming, his bewitching manner making him friends everywhere.

The familiar "Teapot" had its origin so far back as his Eton days, when he was accustomed to brew his tea in an old black teapot, which he carefully cherished in his maturer years of dandyism and campaigning.

Another of the set, the "Silent" Hare, was known by this adjectival affix, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, for it was bestowed on him because of his notorious loquacity—a loquacity which found vent in many languages, and numerous stories are told which not only illustrate this, but also prove the extent of his knowledge and his surprising memory.

One shall suffice here, and this one is interesting, inasmuch as it has also been attributed to the learned Master of Trinity, Dr Whewell, and in our own day to Mr Gladstone.

On a certain occasion, while staying in a country house, some of his friends made bets that they would introduce a subject at dinner which should be too much even for his seemingly universal knowledge. To this end they read up an abstruse article in an old magazine on Chinese music, and, primed with the knowledge thus obtained, opened the discussion with the soup and kept it up gaily between themselves. Hare, for once really living up to his nickname, preserved a stolid silence. At length, when his tormentors had nearly exhausted the subject in all its bearings, he broke in and contradicted their statements severally and at large, and finally proved them all wrong in their facts and conclusions, ending up with: "I see, my good fellows, whence you have taken your impressions on the subject. You have evidently been reading an article I wrote some ten years ago, but since then I have studied the matter afresh and have conversed with well-informed travellers, and I have arrived at directly opposite conclusions to those I held when I penned the article."[1]

"King" Allen, otherwise Viscount Allen, an Irish peer, was another of the noticeable men about town of this period. Always well groomed and somewhat pompous-looking, he is said to have confined his walking exercise entirely to daily promenades between Crockford's and White's.

Allen was one of Wellington's fighting Dandies, having distinguished himself at Talavera, where he and his men were nearly exterminated.

He appears to have been an *arbiter elegantiarum*, and to some extent a patron of the opera and the theatres, but his perennial want of ready money must have made his patronage rather theoretical than practical, and I think must have embittered him, for what anecdotes survive indicate a certain acerbity of temper, not at all consonant with the traditionally sunny nature of a lounger in Pall Mall or Bond Street.

His reputation as a diner-out was well sustained; and it is probable that he managed to scrape along, chiefly by the aid of these eleemosynary feasts, as Fielding would have termed them; at least so thought one of his outspoken female friends, who once told him that his title was as good as board wages to him.

He was a great friend of Sir Robert Peel, and once when driving with him in the environs of Dublin his post-boy had the misfortune to drive over an old woman, whereupon an angry crowd quickly assembled, and matters looked ominous, when the majestic form of Allen arose in the carriage, and his voice was heard exclaiming: "Now, post-boy, go on, and don't drive over any more old women," and the mob made way at once for one whose dignity and coolness could not be gainsaid.

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[1] This Hare is not to be confounded with the friend of Selwyn, called "The Hare with many friends" by the Duchess of Gordon, who was also noted for his wit.

Ball Hughes, sometimes called The Golden Ball, was a very different person. He was a sort of millionaire, which was in those days a rarer thing than it is now, and he seems to have been regarded with most favourable eyes by many mothers; but, on the other hand, the daughters could never be made to recognise how eligible a *parti* was in their midst. Not even a course of Almack's was sufficient to break them in! Why Lady Jane Paget should have thrown him over at the very last moment; why Lady Caroline Churchill should have refused him point blank; why Miss Floyd, who subsequently married Sir Robert Peel, should have found him wanting, are among the mysteries, for he is described as being both handsome and well set up, with excellent manners, *and* with forty thousand a year!

As a result he married the once celebrated and much-run-after *danseuse*, Mademoiselle Mercandotti—a marriage which was for a few days the talk of the town. He carried off his bride to the seclusion of Oatlands, which he had purchased from the Duke of York, and the following epigram was written by Ainsworth, on the event:—

> "The fair damsel is gone; and no wonder at all
> That, bred to the dance, she is gone to a ball."

Of Jack Talbot, that champion and idol of the fair sex, who used to say that he would sooner disoblige his father or his best friend than a pretty woman, I need not say much. He was a friend of Brummell and Alvanley, and, indeed, so far as can be ascertained, of anyone with whom he was brought in contact; he had, however, two failings, and they were—claret and sherry. Alvanley once said that if he were tapped, more of the former wine than of blood would have been found in his veins; and he is known to have drunk the latter at breakfast, as an ordinary man drinks tea or coffee.

It was hardly appropriate that he should be found dead in his chair, with half a bottle of sherry still left standing on the table beside him!

Another of the same gay set was Scrope Davies, who was such an admirer of Tom Moore's genius that he used to say the proper translation of the Horatian line, "*Ubi plura nitent, non ego paucis offendar maculis,*" was "Moore shines so brightly that I cannot find fault with Little's vagaries"; while he rendered *Ne plus ultra* as "Nothing better than Moore." He was, indeed, particularly ready in repartee and quotation, and was the type of the Dandy —*plus* mind. It is probable that he is best remembered by his reply to Brummell's appeal for money on the eve of the latter's departure for Calais:

"My dear Scrope," wrote Brummell, "Lend me £500 for a few days; the funds are shut for the dividends, or I would not have made this request." Quick as lightning came the reply: "My Dear Brummell, all my money is locked up in the funds."

The name of "Poodle" Byng is one that greets us continually in the pages of the social annals of this period. As we have seen, his familiar prefix was the hook on which Brummell hung one of his witty sayings; and, indeed, it was asserted that the nickname had been first given him because he was accustomed to drive out in his "tilbury" with a poodle by his side. Had this been so, then Brummell's remark would have lacked what little wit can be attached to it; but, as a matter of fact, Byng, or rather the Hon. Frederick Byng, to give him his proper designation, himself once gave its true origin. When young, he was noted for his thick curly head of hair, and Lady Bath and Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, were both wont to call him "their poodle" on this account.

"Kangaroo" Cooke, so called because, on once being asked by the Duke of York what sort of food he got in the Peninsula, replied that "he could get nothing to eat but kangaroo," and "Dan" Mackinnon, noted for his agility and his love of practical joking, and of whom Grimaldi once said that "Colonel Mackinnon has only to put on the motley costume and he would totally eclipse me," were among the lesser lights of Almack's and the clubs—men whose names are remembered by a chance saying, some strange freak, or at best by a "bubble reputation"; but with the great D'Orsay the case is different. His name stands, as that of Brummell formerly stood, for the type of dandy. Had Carlyle chosen to study the hero in another incarnation, or had Emerson wished to make his representative men embrace yet another class, there can be little doubt but that they would have each selected Brummell and D'Orsay as the *mannequins* on which to fit the clothes of their philosophy.

Count D'Orsay was the last and in many respects the greatest of the Dandies. He dressed as well as Brummell and his manners were infinitely better; he was, besides, a man of wit and many accomplishments—a sculptor and a clever artist, besides being extremely handsome and of fine physique. "When he appeared in the perfection of dress," says one who knew him, "with that expression of self-confidence and self-complacency which the sense of superiority gives, he was the observed of all." His kindliness of disposition was, too, proverbial, and his wit was only equalled by his appreciation of wit in others.

Of course it goes without saying that he was extravagant—it was his rôle to be so; but if, as Lord Lamington says, "he was *sui profusus*, he was never *alieni appetens*," and greater men have had worse epitaphs.

When he appeared at Almack's he was the cynosure of every eye, as Brummell had been before him. But whereas the latter was feared and imitated, the former was "dressed at" and regarded with something as near affection as any man can be who is superior to his fellows in dress, in looks and in manners.

The general consensus of contemporary opinion is favourable to D'Orsay, and even his connection with Lady Blessington seems only to have misled those who, like Creevey, were willing, if not anxious, to be misled into regarding it as nothing but a vulgar *liaison.* Their conduct was, doubtless, injudicious in the highest degree, but I think it may be regarded as only injudicious.

Count D'Orsay seems to have inherited his good looks from his father, one of Napoleon's officers, whom that critic of men once described as "*aussi brave que beau*"; his wit from his mother, an illegitimate daughter of the King of Würtemberg; and his artistic tastes from his paternal grandfather, who lost most of his treasures during the Revolution.

From a child, D'Orsay was notable, both physically and mentally, and his attachment to the Bonapartes, inculcated in his youthful mind, seems, notwithstanding some causes for complaint during his latter years, never to have left him.

After serving in the Army he came to England for the first time about the year 1821, accompanied by his sister, who had been married to the Duc de Guiche, afterwards Duc de Grammont, who himself had been educated in this country and whose sister had married Lord Ossulston, later Earl of Tankerville, which facts are interesting as largely accounting for the warm reception given to young D'Orsay himself.

It was on this occasion that he became acquainted with Lord and Lady Blessington, and subsequently, at their earnest desire, accompanied them on a tour through France and Italy.

He married, in 1827, Lady Harriet Gardiner, daughter of Lord Blessington by his first wife, from whom he was subsequently separated. This incident is the least defensible in his career, inasmuch as he ought never to have consented to marry a woman for whom he did not really care.

After the separation he lived in constant intercourse with Lady Blessington, whom he regarded as a mother, according to his solemn assurance to Madden, the biographer of the lady.

Indeed, D'Orsay never seems to have entirely recovered from the blow caused by her death, and his latter years in Paris, where he fought against poverty by doing some artistic work, were but years of sorrow and regrets. He died in 1852, and with him died the type of which he was so notable an example.

The name of D'Orsay reminds me that some of the foreign residents in London who did so much towards the success of Almack's, deserve a word at the conclusion of this chapter.

It is probable that at no time has London teemed with so many illustrious "aliens" as at the moment when, the great Napoleon having been finally beaten, Europe gave itself up to that sort of delight that a schoolboy may feel when his master has been called away and he is free to follow his own devices.

Englishmen overran the Continent; foreigners forgot their traditional terrors of the Channel and flocked to see what manner of strange being John Bull might be at home.

I don't know whether Almack's was as particular about admitting foreigners within its precincts as it was in allowing any but the most eligible of Englishmen into its rooms. Probably; for most of those who became regular visitors here either bore the names of great families or were attached to the numerous embassies which, now that Napoleon's yoke was removed, were sent over from the various countries that had for years been under his domination.

Of such were, of course, Prince Paul Esterhazy, the Austrian Ambassador, and the Baron de Neumann, Secretary to that Embassy, and both, as we have seen, closely connected with Almack's and inveterate dancers at its assemblies.

The Prince, one of that great Hungarian family whose name is illustrious in European politics and social life, was the son of Prince Nicholas Esterhazy, and was born in 1786. After serving as Austrian Minister to Dresden and in Westphalia he was, in 1814, promoted Ambassador to Rome, but in the following year was transferred to London, where he remained three years. Returning again in 1830 he continued here till 1838, when he retired from active political work and went to reside on his vast estates, where he died in 1861. His connection with this country was further emphasised by the fact that his son, Prince Nicholas, married in 1842 Lady Sarah Villiers, daughter of the 5th Earl of Jersey and of Lady Jersey, the redoubtable patroness of Almack's.

Baron de Neumann became equally closely connected with us, for he married Lady Augusta Somerset, daughter of the 7th Duke of Beaufort, and died in 1850, not long after he had been appointed Austrian Ambassador at Florence. He seems to have been very friendly with Raikes and, although not, as a rule, communicative, as no diplomatist should be, to have imparted a certain modicum of political news to the diarist, who duly noted it.

Another foreign figure at Almack's was the Comte St Antonio, who is shown in the sketch of the 1815 ball there as dancing with Princess Esterhazy. The Comte later became Duc di Canizzaro, and appears to have been married to Miss Johnson,[1] an heiress. That they did not get on well together is evidenced by Raikes, who speaks of the husband only seeming anxious to avoid every country where his wife might happen to take up her residence, and more particularly by the fact that they were afterwards separated. The Duke survived his wife, dying at Como in 1841, "said," writes Raikes, "to have been poisoned by overdoing the homœopathic system."

Another *habitué* of Almack's who married an English girl was the Comte de Flahault, to whom Miss Mercer, daughter of Admiral Lord Keith and his first wife, co-heir of Colonel Mercer, was united. Many were the aspirants to Miss Mercer's hand. She favoured at one time, the Princess Lieven tells us, Comte Pahlen, at another Narischkine, and there was even talk of Byron's marrying her, which, according to the message he sent her on his leaving England, seems to have been more than probable. Miss Mercer was an heiress, and a beautiful one, and the Comte was considered a lucky man in winning her. In 1823 she succeeded to the Barony of Keith, and fourteen years later to that of Nairne, through her maternal grandfather.

Baron Tripp and M. Bourblanc are the last of the foreigners associated with Almack's who require a few words. The former was a Dutchman and emigrated from Holland at the beginning of the century, according to Raikes, on whose diary I rely for the facts known about him and M. Bourblanc.

Tripp obtained a commission in the 10th Light Dragoons, the Prince Regent's own regiment, and with this connection with a crack regiment, coupled with a handsome face and a pleasant manner, he was received by the world of fashion with open arms. He was, says

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[1] Raikes spells it Johnston.

Raikes, "an agreeable boaster, swearing like a Hussar and speaking a sort of *baragouin*, half German, half French-English, which was very entertaining."

Later, Tripp took up his residence in Brussels, where a duel with the father of a young lady to whom he had paid too marked attention excited a not very favourable impression. Subsequently he migrated to Florence, where he lived a good deal in the society of Lord and Lady Burghersh. There he fell in love with a married lady named Mrs Fitzherbert, and finished an ornamental, if not particularly useful, career by shooting himself with a pistol borrowed from a friend, whether from jealousy or unrequited passion, or really because, as he said in some lines he left scribbled on his writing-table, because he was tired of life, is a mystery.

Bourblanc's fate was a still more tragic one and curiously out of keeping with his fleeting career among the most highly civilised society of the day, for, having been sent by his Government on some distant mission, the ship he sailed in touched at an unknown island and Bourblanc joined a landing-party. They had, however, hardly set foot on shore before they were surrounded by cannibals, killed and actually devoured by the savages, in the very sight of their vessel!

The unhappy victim of this awful fate had been an attaché to an embassy, had been a great exponent of the waltz and the quadrille at Almack's, and had even written verses in defence of the former dance, singing its innocence and its charms—lines which, if not very good, were supported by irreproachable sentiments, and he had lived in the best society of his day. Could, then, a fate be more singular than that he should fall a victim to savage hands and be eaten by savage jaws.

V

THE LATER HISTORY OF ALMACK'S

As we have seen, Almack's hey-day of fashion and splendour lasted from its inauguration in 1765 till about 1835. After that period, however, signs were not wanting that its decay was at hand, and, as I have noted, a writer in *The Quarterly* did not fail to observe this in 1840.

It is not difficult to understand the reason for this gradual decay. In the first place, conditions of society were rapidly changing. With the accession of Queen Victoria an entirely new era was inaugurated, and the very fact that a female sovereign sat on the throne made it more difficult for powerful ladies of the aristocracy to sustain that leadership of fashion which did not clash with royal prerogative in this respect, while easy-going monarchs like George IV. and William IV. governed the country.

Added to this, we must remember that the ladies who formed the most formidable portion of the once powerful tribunal of Almack's were undeniably growing old, or else, as in the case of the Princess Lieven and the Princess Esterhazy, had left this country; and the break-up of this "coalition," combined with the new conditions of society that soon obtained, was quite sufficient to weaken so seriously the constitution of Almack's that it gradually became at first *dêmodé* and then but a memory.

With the extinction of the balls Almack's was generally known as Willis's Rooms, although long before their discontinuance Willis, the nephew of Almack, had managed them.

During the earlier years of the Victorian era the rooms were used for dances, lectures and readings, and concerts. Indeed, so far as the last-named entertainments were concerned, there had been a precedent, for it is known that the lady patronesses from time to time permitted concerts and balls[1] to be given here for the benefit of fashionable professors of dancing and celebrated musicians and singers. Here, from 1808 to 1810, Mrs Billington and Braham and Signor Naldi gave a series of concerts in opposition to those of Madame Catalini at the Hanover Square Rooms. Here M. Fierville held his subscription balls, for which Bartolozzi engraved the beautiful little benefit tickets, as well as many other similar entrance cards for various benefit performances given at Almack's, which are still to be met with.[2]

In 1839 there appeared here one of those remarkable prodigies of which we have seen so many in our own day. In this case it was a Master Bassie, aged thirteen, who, according to Thornbury, "appeared here in an extraordinary mnemonic performance."

Five years later Charles Kemble gave his "Readings from Shakespeare" in the great ballroom. But the rooms were to resound to the voices of still more remarkable men, for here, in 1851, Thackeray delivered his series of Lectures on the English Humourists. The course was given on the afternoons of the 22nd and 29th of May, the 12th, 19th and 26th of June and the 3rd of July, the price of admission being £2, 2s. for the set of six lectures, these seats being reserved, and 7s. 6d. for a single unreserved place.

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[1] In July 1821 a splendid ball was given here in honour of the Coronation of George IV. by the Duc de Grammont, Envoy Extraordinary from the French Court, when the King, the Duke of Wellington and various members of the Royal Family were present. Rush, in his *Court of London*, mentions this dance, and notes that a beautiful bouquet was presented to each lady as she entered the room.

[2] In the author's possession is a "Gentlemen's Ticket" for the "Amicable Assembly" held here on the 16th of May 1822; it is not filled up with the name of the recipient, but bears that of the Secretary, J. K. Silver, who acted as Introducer in this instance.

Seldom, perhaps, had that "great painted and gilded saloon, with long sofas for benches," as Charlotte Brontë described it, been filled, even in the hey-day of its fashion, with such an illustrious throng. Here were to be seen the authoress of *Jane Eyre* timidly exchanging greetings with Monckton Milnes and Lord Carlisle; here that amusing diarist, Caroline Fox, noted Carlyle, Dickens and the painter Leslie, besides "innumerable noteworthy people"; here came the learned Hallam, the omniscient Macaulay, the very "blue" Harriet Martineau.

Charlotte Brontë and Caroline Fox have both left their impressions of the reader and his treatment of his subject, and the former writes that "there is quite a *furore* for his lectures"; "they are a sort of essay, characterised by his own peculiar originality and power, and delivered with a finished taste and ease, which is felt but cannot be described"; while Miss Fox records how the lecturer "reads in a definite, rather dry manner, but makes you understand thoroughly what he is about."

After the lecture at which Charlotte Brontë was present, Thackeray came towards her and asked her for her opinion on his performance; but before another of the series he seems to have been in a state of nervousness, rendering him incapable of thinking or acting for himself at all, and Fanny Kemble, in her *Records of Later Life*, gives an amusing picture of the scene.

"I found him," she writes, "standing like a forlorn, disconsolate giant in the middle of the room, gazing about him. 'Oh, Lord!' he exclaimed, as he shook hands with me, 'I'm sick at my stomach with fright!' I spoke some words of encouragement to him and was going away, but he held my hand like a scared child, crying, 'Oh, don't leave me!' 'But,' said I, 'Thackeray, you mustn't stand here. Your audience are beginning to come in,' and I drew him from the middle of his chairs and benches, which were beginning to be occupied, into the retiring room adjoining the lecture-room. . . . Here he began pacing up and down, literally wringing his hands in nervous distress. 'Now,' said I, 'what shall I do? Shall I stay with you till you begin, or shall I go and leave you to collect yourself?' 'Oh,' he said, 'if I could only get at that confounded thing (the lecture) to have a last look at it!' 'Where is it?' said I. 'Oh! in the next room on the reading-desk.' When she had fetched it she accidentally let it fall, tumbling the leaves in inextricable confusion. 'My dear soul,' said Thackeray, 'you couldn't have done better for me. I have just a quarter of an hour to wait here and it will take me about that to page this again, and it's the best thing in the world that could have happened.'"

The other great voice that echoed in that room was that of Dickens, who, although he delivered none of *his* lectures here, on two occasions presided at public dinners in the Great Room, the first being on 14th February 1866, when he acted as chairman at the annual feast of the Dramatic, Equestrian and Musical Fund, and spoke in support of the institution, and also proposed one of the toasts; the second being on 5th June of the following year, when he took the chair at the Ninth Anniversary Festival of the "Railway Benevolent Society," and proposed the toast of the evening in that felicitous manner that earned for him the reputation of being one of the best after-dinner speakers of his time.

It is not necessary to specify all the various entertainments that have taken place in Willis's Rooms since the time of Almack's assemblies to that when they were appropriated to their present uses; such a list would be rather tiresome and not particularly instructive.

To-day the Great Room has become the auction mart of the well-known firm of Messrs Robinson & Fisher, who have made such alterations in the adjoining parts of the building in their occupation as were required by the exigencies of their business, forming spacious offices at the top of that once so celebrated staircase, beside which a note of modernity is given by the presence of the nowadays indispensable lift.

That there is a precedent for the use of the rooms for such a purpose is evidenced by the fact that on 20th July 1837 Messrs J. G. & G. A. Sharp sold here by auction, "By Order of the Trustees appointed by His Majesty for the Collection and Distribution of the Deccan Booty," the famous Nassuck Diamond (weighing 357½ grains—and of the Purest Water), which had been "captured by the Combined Armies"—I quote the catalogue lying before me—"under the command of the late Most Noble General the Marquis of Hastings, G.C.B., etc., etc."

Together with this famous stone were disposed of (by order of the executors of the late Mr Bridge of Ludgate Hill) "The Celebrated Arcot Diamonds, which were formerly sold by direction of the Executors of Her late Majesty, Queen Charlotte," as well as other valuable jewels, formerly in the possession of Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, Joseph Bonaparte and the Sultan Selim.

The catalogue is illustrated by copper-plates representing the various facets of the Nassuck Diamond and also the Arcot Diamonds.

The latter were the famous stones which Warren Hastings, on his return to England in 1785, presented to Queen Charlotte, and which were supposed to have influenced her Majesty in receiving Mrs Hastings, whose past had not been irreproachable.

At Queen Charlotte's death they had been purchased by Mr Bridge, the famous jeweller.

Other portions of Almack's have undergone a radical change; on the west side of the entrance is now Prince's Restaurant—a fashionable resort, and it is said favourably entreated of by White's Club itself; on the east side are various small business premises, flanked at the end by the old-world house which forms the headquarters of the Orleans Club; so that few traces of the original characteristics of the once famous Almack's remain.

VI

ALMACK'S IN FICTION

Considering what an important part was played by Almack's in the realms of fashion, and also what an amount of power and influence was wielded by the lady patronesses who directed its fortunes, it is but natural that in the fiction of the day it should be continually mentioned, and its high priestesses made to play a part in the novels which appeared during the early years of the nineteenth century, especially when we remember that these novels were what are wont to be termed "fashionable" ones.

Thackeray has had his laugh at this sort of literature, and, indeed, there is not much to be said in its defence; but if one wished to enact the part of the *advocatus diaboli,* one might point out that it had its uses, and still has its value, in presenting a more or less correct picture of the manners of a period which seems as far removed from us as the times of the Tudors or Stuarts.

The days when it was considered *the* thing to drive down to Richmond and dine at The Star and Garter; to dance nightly at The Pantheon, The Argyle Rooms, or Almack's; to pass the evening at Ranelagh or Vauxhall, are gone with the snows of yester-year. No longer does the gilded youth of the period twist off knockers, upset Charleys (the Charley is as dead as the megatherium!), or frequent The Shades or the Thieves' Kitchen, or other haunts as low or disreputable.

Bohemia has enlarged its borders, and the inhabitants of that free-and-easy country now take their pleasures, if more soberly, at least in better lighted and regulated haunts. But in the earlier days of the last century things were different; there was a certain boisterous merriment about the nocturnal pleasures of our forbears which neither the L.C.C. nor the Metropolitan Police would think of permitting.

The novelists and recorders of manners and customs in the earlier days, when Almack's flourished, have, however, a different tale to tell, and the telling of it, if it sometimes fills us with some disgust, at least helps to picture to our minds how curious and complete a change of life has befallen London in the relatively short space of time which has since passed by.

The sort of assemblies of which Almack's was the most important, the most select, the most tyrannic, have no equivalent to-day; and such novels as record its customs and the manners of its *habitués*, even if they are, as is generally the case, otherwise worthless, possess a sort of value as documents *pour servir* for a more complete comprehension of its history, and form, indeed, a kind of antiquarian guide to its secret annals.

The chief work of fiction bearing on our particular theme is itself entitled *Almack's*, which shows that it is not only largely based on this institution, but promises some interesting side-lights on its inner workings, from the point of view of a contemporary.

Almack's was published by Saunders & Otley, of Conduit Street, in 1827, and that it had some success is proved by the fact that at least three editions were called for. This success is easily understood when it is remembered that the novel was of that order known as "Romans à clef," in which actual personages are adumbrated under the veil of fictitious names; and though *Almack's* bears on its title the excellent advice of Othello, to "Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice," this maxim was not always strictly adhered to. The three volumes in which the work appeared were prefaced by a dedication, which must be given in full. It runs thus:

To that Most Distinguished and Despotic
CONCLAVE,
Composed of their High Mightinesses the
Lady Patronesses of the Balls at
ALMACK'S,
The Rulers of Fashion, the Arbiters of Taste, the
Leaders of Ton, and the Makers of Manners, whose
Sovereign sway over "the world" of London has
long been established on the firmest basis, whose
Decrees are Laws, and from whose judgement there
is no appeal;
To these important Personages, all and severally,
who have formed, or who do form, any part of that
ADMINISTRATION,
usually denominated
THE WILLIS COALITION CABAL
Whether Members of the Committee of Supply,
or
CABINET COUNSELLORS,
Holding seats at the Board of Control,
The following pages,
are with all due respect, humbly dedicated by
AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.

I am not going to inflict on a long-suffering reader my account of the novel; I have read it through and fail to detect anything in the nature of a plot. It consists, indeed, simply of a number of scenes of fashionable life in town and country, and the main object of everybody seems to be how they can best advance their own interests as aspirants for fashionable fame.

Homer sings of the search for the Golden Fleece;

Malory writes of the quest of the Holy Grail; the novelist of 1827 shows us the pursuit of tickets for subscription dances!

The knights of the beginning of the nineteenth century did not keep holy vigils, or, sheathed in mail, rescue high-born damsels from the clutch of dragons or robbers: no; these later embodiments of the chivalric idea entered into long and difficult intrigues to procure a card of admission to Almack's, and the guerdon they received was a belated dance or the privilege of finding their fair one's carriage at what-you-like-o'clock of a rainy morning!

This is how one of the characters in the novel, the Marchioness of Glenmore, though in "a delicate situation," speaks of the chance of figuring in those rooms: "Oh! Lady Anne, do you know I have got a promise from my Lord that I shall go to Almack's when I am in town? that is, if I am pretty well. I told him I would lie on the sofa now as long as he pleased if he would promise me that; and so he did, *and I took care to have a written agreement about it.* I do so long to go there."

One can hardly credit the trouble that was taken to procure tickets, but as Lady Anne, in the novel, exclaims: "The fuss makes the pleasure," and for this reason, as she continues, "the uncertainty attending your success; getting a ticket when you know how many girls have been refused who have superior pretensions to any you can boast; the consciousness that you owe all your interest to your personal merit, your good looks, your *ton*, your taste in dress, your graceful dancing, or your lively wit. Oh! there is nothing like Almack's." But it is not only the ladies who are enthusiastic about the place. "Almack's!" exclaims Lord Hazlemore to Lady Anne, "delightful word! Does not it make your heart beat even to hear it? There is nothing worth living for in town till the lady patronesses are arrived, and dear Lady

Hauton is busy with her committees and her tickets." Another character, Lord Glenmore, is not, however, of this way of thinking, and he utters some home-truths on the subject: "The system of Almack's," he says, "is altogether the most unnatural coalition that ever existed in any society. A set of foolish women caballing together to keep the rest of the world in their trammels, who have no kind of right to do so but what they choose to arrogate to themselves, is a very curious state of things certainly, but that they should have found hundreds of independent people silly enough to bend to their yoke is the most extraordinary part of the story."

Lord and Lady Tresilian agree with this verdict. The former, asked how he would describe good society, replies: "In the Almack's acceptation it means the friends, admirers and toadies of the six ladies patronesses, foreigners of all countries and of all grades, who speak French or broken English. If you do not belong to any one of these classes, vain are your pretensions: you can never be admitted *to be one of us.*" To which Lady Tresilian adds quite a little history of the procedure of the patronesses.

"This institution," says her ladyship, "has now existed ten years, and six self-elected female sovereigns have, during all that time, held the keys of the great world, as St Peter was supposed to do those of the kingdom of Heaven. These ladies decide, in a weekly committee, upon the distribution of the tickets for admission: the whole is a matter of favour, interest, or calculation; for neither rank, distinction, nor merit of any kind will serve as a plea, unless the candidate has the good fortune to be already upon the visiting-book of one of these all-powerful patronesses. Not to be known to one of the six, must indeed argue yourself quite unknown." And she adds: "Almack's is a system of tyranny which would never be submitted to in any country but one of such complete freedom that people are at liberty to make fools of themselves"; while her husband ends the discussion by informing Colonel Montague, whom they are both initiating into the mysteries of Almack's, that a certain distinguished foreigner, over in this country in an official position, determined not to submit to these rigorous rules, but that he had to finally give in, and in doing so he was heard to exclaim:

"Qu'est-ce que la gloire! il n'y en a donc plus! Quand on a vu le Conquérant d'Austerlitz mourir à St Hélène, et son vainqueur content de se mettre sur la liste des élégantes d'Almack's, on peut bien dire, 'Il n'y a plus de gloire!'"

The seventh chapter of the third volume is entitled "Almack's Ball," and is headed by those lines in Luttrell's *Advice to Julia,* in which the poet exclaims:

"Oh! that I dared, since hearts of iron
Melt at the strains of Moore and Byron,
Borrow their thoughts and language now
To paint our Almack's belles: for how,
Unless their Muse my fancy warms,
Describe such features and such forms."

I don't think any specific details of this chapter would be exhilarating. Balls are much alike, and those at Almack's seem not greatly to have varied from those we have all attended. The point was the difficulty in getting admitted, and of that, I think, I have given sufficient proof.

It is evident that the author of the novel, whoever he may have been, was *au courant* with the various modes of procedure, both in the matter of allotting or withholding tickets, the election of patronesses and the rules formulated by the tribunal. Of the latter he gives a copy; while the notification to the Baroness de Wallenstein of her election to that body is obviously an authentic document filled in with fictitious names. It runs thus:

"James and William Willis have received the instructions of the Ladies Patronesses of the balls at Almack's, to inform the Baroness de Wallenstein that, at the Committee held this day, an unanimous resolution was passed, to confer on her Excellency the office of Patroness, vacant by the resignation of the Dowager Countess of Lochaber."

"KING STREET, ST JAMES'S.

"J. and W. Willis have the honour to inform the Baroness de Wallenstein that the regular committee for the discharge of business will meet as usual, on Monday the 8th of April, when her attendance is *most* earnestly and particularly *desired.* The Countess of Hauton in the Chair."

But if this is a substantially correct transcript of one of the regular notices issued under such circumstances, an advertisement supposed to have been sent to the papers by the management of Almack's, which Lady Anne reads to Lady Hauton and Lady Norbury, and which she says to those *grandes dames* "cuts you all up famously," is an amusing skit, and shows much knowledge of the various characters of the patronesses. I will give it in full and it shall be the last extract from these not altogether unamusing volumes:

"ALMACK'S.

"A vacancy having occurred in the direction of Almack's, we have been solicited to give currency to the following

"ADVERTISEMENT.

"*Wanted* for the ensuing season at Almack's, as Patroness, a person of undeniable character, quick parts, good address, and well known in the fashionable world: she must possess a good memory, be complete mistress of the peerage, and write a free running hand, besides being sufficiently grounded in the rudiments of arithmetic to understand the extent of the numbers to be admitted on her books. Her manner must be decided, so that she be always capable of giving evasive answers or positive denials, according to the situation of those from whom she receives applications.

"She must possess great tact, in order to be able to practise with precision the different degrees of the *art of cutting*; which last qualification must be a *sine qua non* previous to any attempt to enter as candidate.

"And whereas many extraordinary-looking persons, whose faces were unknown, have occasionally been suffered to appear at Almack's, more especially about Easter, it is hereby specified that none can be considered candidates for the office who are *in any way connected* with any singular-looking persons of either sex.

"The above regulation will be strictly attended to, as, owing to the Ladies Patronesses' desire of obliging, the Committee might find themselves placed in disagreeable circumstances. No very good-natured person need apply, as it takes much time to get rid of that objectionable quality.

"*N.B.*—The situation is particularly adapted for widows. The inconvenience of disobliging persons of respectability who come from the country (and who of necessity are among the *proscrits*) having led to serious consequences in county elections.

"Apply to any of the Ladies Patronesses for further information."

Some time after the appearance of the novel a key to it was issued, said to have been compiled by no less a person than Benjamin Disraeli. Some of the names are not difficult to guess without its aid, Lady Hauton being Lady Jersey, and the Baroness de Wallenstein thinly veiling the Princess Lieven; by its help, however, the whole *dramatis personæ* stand forth as well-known personages.

The name of Disraeli reminds me that in some of his earlier novels Almack's figures. Particularly does one recall the debut of that wonderful young duke here, where "he galloped with grace and waltzed with vigour," and "his dancing was declared consummate." But when the author takes us to Castle Dacre he warns us that the party assembled there were not fashionable people, and tells us that "we shall sadly want a lady patroness to issue a decree or quote her code of consolidated etiquette." "I am not sure," he adds, "that Almack's will ever be mentioned"; but at the same time we must remember that the name of Lady Almack is introduced in *Vivian Grey* as indicating a noble dame of ultra-fashionable proclivities.

In those now long-forgotten three-volume novels of the twenties, thirties and forties of the last century—the works of Mrs Moberley and John Mills and a host of other now well-nigh unknown writers of fiction—books which are sometimes found in second-hand stalls or are occasionally met with among the unregretted rubbish of seaside circulating libraries—Almack's name occurs again and again, and many of these volumes are filled with the fashionable flummery of which Almack's was the special temple.

It is not surprising that in the novels of Dickens Almack's receives no mention. Thackeray, on the other hand, although I don't remember any allusion to it in his greater books, posed as a man of fashion and knew the rooms probably at first hand; in any case the egregious "Jeames de la Pluche, Exquire," is to be found alluding to himself as "worling round in walce at Halmax with Lady Hann, or lazaly stepping a kidrill with Lady Jane."

So, too, in *Tom and Jerry* we find that wonderful pair, with Corinthian Tom, making a glorious trio, now in Tom Cribb's parlour, now at the opera, the play, and, bliss of bliss, at Almack's itself, "amidst a crowd of high-bred personages, with the Duke of Clarence himself looking at them dancing."[1]

The pencil of Cruikshank has immortalised the doings of these heroes and shows us the gilded hall of the great Temple of Fashion itself.

I have always thought it rather strange that in *D'Horsay, or The Follies of the Day,* where high life, and sometimes very low life indeed, is described with some minuteness, and the career of the great D'Orsay himself forms the staple of the argument, as it were, no mention is made of Almack's. Was it that Mills, its author, feared to desecrate the sacred place by too rough handling? Had he received a hint that such a reference would be resented? Is the absence of the name due to respect, inadequacy or caution?

Although the references to Almack's in the fiction of the day are general rather than particular and, except in the novel from which I have quoted at some length, hardly repay the time necessary for a careful investigation, there is one little book published in the twenties in which the name occurs again and again. I allude to the *Advice to Julia*, the work of that witty man about town, Henry Luttrell.

The poem is one of those of which the name is, I suspect, better known than the lines themselves, but it is well worth reading, because, in always easy, sometimes graceful and frequently witty verse, the author gives us a clearly defined picture of the period, so far as that period is represented by the fashionable life of the West End. Indeed, the poem may be described as a generalising journal in verse, and considering the extravagant vagaries of fashion at the period in which it was penned, it is agreeably free from spite or bitterness, although the author is ever ready to hit off in easy persiflage the passing follies of the hour.

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[1] See Thackeray's *Roundabout Paper* entitled "De Juventute."

I have already quoted some lines from the work in an earlier chapter; let me give a few more extracts:

"There" (at Almack's), writes Luttrell,

"There, baffled Cupid points his darts
With surer aim, at jaded hearts;
And Hymen, lurking in the porch,
But half conceals his lighted torch.
Hence the petitions and addresses
So humble to the Patronesses;
The messages and notes, by dozens,
From their Welch aunts and twentieth cousins,
Who hope to get their daughters in
By proving they are *founders' kin.*"

Indeed, to such an extent did this sort of thing go that in a note to the poem it is actually asserted that an application made to the patronesses on behalf of a young lady, contained her portrait!—which astounding fact is referred to in the following lines:—

"Hence the smart miniatures enclosed
Of unknown candidates proposed;
Hence is the fair divan at Willis's
Beset with Corydons and Phillises,
Trying, with perseverance steady,
First one, and then another lady,
Who oft, 'tis rumoured, don't agree,
But clash like law and equity;
Some for the Rules in all their vigour,
Others to mitigate their rigour."

Well may the author ask:

"How shall the Muse, with colours faint
And pencil blunt, aspire to paint
Such high-raised hopes, such chilling fears?"

when he can tell how

"The bold becomes an abject croucher,
And the grave—giggle for a voucher";

and can see

"— all bow down—maids, widows, wives—
As sentenced culprits beg their lives,
As lovers court their fair one's graces,
As politicians sue for places."

The introduction of the quadrille presented unexpected difficulties to the novices of that now too familiar dance, and an expedient was found for those who were unable to stamp the various figures on their memory; in fact, this was no less than a card of directions, and the curious spectacle was thus presented of a dancer who, to continue in Luttrell's words,

"Holds, lest the figure should be hard,
Close to his nose a printed card,
Which, for their special use invented,
To Beaus, on entrance, is presented;
A strange device, but all allow
'Tis useful—as it tells them how
To foot it in the proper places
Much better than their partner's faces."

There is much more in the same strain, but an end must be made of quotations. Let me finish them with a few lines, in which the apotheosis of splendour is reached, and, notwithstanding the heart-burnings outside the magic portals, all within is light and laughter:

"O! Julia, could you now but creep
Incog. into the room and peep,
Well might you triumph in the view
Of all he has resign'd to you!

Mark, how the married and the single
In yon gay groups delighted mingle!
Midst diamonds blazing, tapers beaming,
Midst Georges, stars and crosses gleaming,
We gaze on beauty, catch the sound
Of music, and of mirth around;
And Discord feels her empire ended
At Almack's—or at least suspended."

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